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The Doctrine of Partes Orationis in the  
Speculative Grammars of the Modistae:  
with special reference to the works  
of Siger de Courtrai  
and Thomas of Erfurt.

Thesis  
submitted for the  
Ph.D. degree  
of the University of London  
by  
Geoffrey Leslie Bursill-Hall

School of Oriental and African Studies  
July 1959.



To  
the Memory  
of my Father



## Abstract

This thesis contains a preface, an introduction, and a table of contents; it also contains six chapters and concludes with six appendices, the last of which is the bibliography, and a brief chronology.

The first two chapters are introductory: the first chapter describes the history of grammatical writing in Europe from the ancient Greeks up to the Middle Ages; the second chapter describes briefly the mediaeval background to the Modistae, writers of speculative grammars in the later Middle Ages.

Chapter three describes their grammatical theories against the metaphysical theories of reality on which they constructed their theories; the second part of this chapter contains an analysis of their technical vocabulary.

The fourth chapter analyses the descriptive procedure of the Modistae: it is divided into two parts. The first part, 'elements', describes the creation of a pars orationis beginning with the expression (vox) and culminating in the pars orationis: the second section, 'categories', describes the process beginning with the thing to be signified and its properties (modus essendi) and ending with its grammatical signification (modus significandi).

Chapter five is an analysis of Modistic descriptions of the partes orationis, and is divided into two parts: the first



part contains the description of the eight partes orationis; the second part discusses Modistic syntactic theory.

The sixth chapter attempts to evaluate the grammatical theories of the Modistae with reference to modern linguistic theories.

The thesis concludes with six appendices. The first contains a brief comparison of Siger de Courtrai and Thomas of Erfurt, the principal members of our corpus: the second contains definitions of the modes used to describe the partes orationis: the third and fourth are diagrammatic expositions of their descriptions of the partes orationis and their syntax: the fifth contains a glossary of technical terms: the final appendix contains the bibliography.



## 0.1 Preface

I take much pleasure in acknowledging with real gratitude the great amount of help I have received during the past two years and which has enabled me to complete this research project.

My sincere thanks to President N.A.M. McKenzie and the Board of Governors of the University of British Columbia for the extended leave of absence of two academic years from my post at the University of British Columbia, which has enabled me to complete the residence requirements towards the Ph.D. degree of the University of London and also to undertake and complete the research and writing of this thesis. My thanks also to Professor J.G. Andison, Head of the Department of Romance Studies in the University of British Columbia, who made the necessary arrangements for my leave of absence and its extension of one year, and for his encouragement to complete this project. I have to acknowledge and thank the Canada Council for the award of a Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, the British Council for an award under their Commonwealth University Exchange Scheme, the Trustees of the Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation for their grant-in-aid of research, and to the Central Research Fund of the University of London for the grant which enabled me to have photostats made of the "Grammatica Speculativa" of Thomas of Erfurt (pseudo Duns Scotus); without all this help, it would not have been possible for me to undertake this whole project.



My debt to my supervisor, Mr. R.F. Robins, Reader in General Linguistics in the University of London, is very great indeed. I owe to him the choice of subject which has introduced me to a whole new field of scholarship. More important still, he has been throughout, a constant source of patient and friendly guidance, warm encouragement, and scholarly stimulus; the great care and thoroughness he has shown in directing my work has been a very real lesson to me in the gentle art of supervision. The imperfections of this thesis are due entirely to my own inadequacies.

I would like to thank Professor C.E. Bazell and his colleagues of the Department of Linguistics in the School of Oriental and African Studies for the warm welcome and friendly encouragement I have received from them. My thanks also to Dr. R.W. Hunt of the Bodleian Library, Oxford for the loan of his transcriptions of Robert Kilwardby's Grammar and the Digby MS and also for the loan of reprints of his own researches in mediaeval grammarians: my thanks to Mr. J.E. Tolson, Librarian of Sheffield University, for the loan of his unpublished thesis, a critical edition of Peter Helias's commentaries on the Priscian Minor. I would also like to thank Father F.P. Dinneen, S.J., with whom I have enjoyed many fruitful discussions on mediaeval grammatical theories and their relation to mediaeval metaphysics and modern linguistic theory.



Lastly, my thanks to my wife, not only for the material help in preparing the typescript, but for her constant encouragement, for without that this thesis would most surely never have been completed.

G.L. Bursill-Hall.

London, 1959.



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## 0.2 Introduction

This thesis represents a new departure for studies in General Linguistics; the speculative grammarians of the Middle Ages are quite well known to most scholars of the Middle Ages but are almost unknown to the majority of modern linguists. This thesis attempts to make a critical examination of these mediaeval grammarians, not, however, by a mediaevalist but ~~by a modern linguist~~; the aim has been to examine and describe the grammatical theories, in particular the theories of the partes orationis, of this group of speculative grammarians known as the Modistae, who were active in the later 13th and early 14th centuries, and to assess their relevance, if any, to modern linguistic doctrine.

Grammatical theory and study in Europe can look back on an unbroken past of some 2000 years - (and this does not take into account the great work of Indian scholars of the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. whose work was not known in Europe until well after the Middle Ages); little is known, however, by modern linguists about this long and illustrious past. R.H. Robins, in his study (1), showed the broad lines of progress in grammatical study from the ancient Greeks to the close of the Middle Ages, but as H. Hoenigswald pointed out in his review (2) of this work, it is not yet possible to write the history of grammatical theory, since so much of the

- 
- 1) R.H. Robins, Ancient and Mediaeval Grammatical Theory in Europe, London 1951.
  - 2) H.M. Hoenigswald, Review of: R.H. Robins, Ancient and Mediaeval Grammatical Theory in Europe. Language 29 (1953) 180-182.



original material remains to be edited and interpreted; Robins, indeed, has followed up with a more detailed examination of the grammatical theories of Dionysius Thrax (1), one of the grammarians mentioned in his earlier book. This thesis is similarly a critical examination of the theories of a group of grammarians in the Middle Ages, i.e. the Modistae, and is in effect a study in depth of this group of grammarians whose theories were also briefly outlined in Robins's book.

There is a great deal more still to be done before linguists will be in a position to write the history of their science; if we consider the period of the later Middle Ages, beginning with the rediscovery of Aristotle, we find that there are a large number of grammarians, prior to the Modistae, scholars of real importance in their day whose work has never been interpreted by the Modern linguists - I refer to the work of scholars such as Peter Pelias, Petrus Hispanus, Robert Kilwardby, John of Salisbury, etc.; furthermore, much of their work still remains unedited in the original manuscript. This is one field at least where there can be genuine and fruitful co-operation between the philologist and the structural linguist.

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1) R.H. Robins, "Dionysius Thrax and the Western Grammatical Tradition, T.P.S. (1957), 67-106.



## Chapter I

### 1.0 The History of Grammar up to the Middle Ages.

The study of grammar in Europe has a long and fruitful history (1) and linguistics is now recognised in most universities as an autonomous academic subject. It has not always enjoyed such a privileged position, and linguistic speculation in the past, especially in ancient Greece and the Middle Ages, was carried on by men who were not primarily grammarians and who introduced theories and terminologies from various associated disciplines, e.g. logic, metaphysics, etc. to support or explain their linguistic theories.

The purpose of this chapter is to survey very briefly the grammatical heritage of the Modistae; this can be thought of as descending from three sources. The Greeks were pioneers in grammatical theory as in so many other fields, and this left its mark on grammatical studies and theories in the Middle Ages; the Modistae knew no Greek, but the lessons of the Greeks came to them via the Latin grammarians, particularly Donatus and Priscian, who had themselves, and by their own admission, built their grammars on the theories of Thrax and Apollonius. The Modistae acquired from Donatus and Priscian, not only the grammatical theories of Thrax and Apollonius, but also their theories and organisation of their material.

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1) J.R. Firth, The Technique of Semantics. Papers in Linguistics, p. 139.



Apollonius and Thrax themselves had derived their grammatical theories from Aristotle, the Stoics and other philosophers of language in the sense that these philosophers were the great pioneers of grammatical writing in ancient Greece, and without their work the theories of the Alexandrian school would not really have been possible. This is the second source, though it can be considered an indirect one, dormant through the history of grammar from the Alexandrians onward, until it appears once more - and this represents the third source - as a positive factor in the great syntheses of grammarians of the 12th and 13th centuries, such as Peter Helias and Robert Kilwardby who wrote commentaries on Priscian's grammar which we might call the culmination of Graeco-Roman grammatical writing, using the terminology and critical processes that they had acquired from ancient Greek logical and philosophical works which had recently been discovered by the West.

The third source then is through the influence of Peter Helias and other commentators of Priscian; there seems to be some doubt about Peter's exact status in the academic world of the 12th century (1) but it seems safe to say that he was the first in the mediaeval world to make a systematic attempt to relate the ideas of the new philosophy (i.e. Aristotle's rediscovered philosophy) to the study of grammar. Peter Helias thus represents one of the first attempts to make a fusion of the two schools of Greek grammatical theory, i.e.

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1) R.W.Hunt, Studies on Priscian in the 11th and 12th centuries. Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies II (1950), p. 39.



Aristotle, the Stoics and other philosophical schools on the one hand, and the grammatical theories of Thrax and Apollonius transmitted to the Middle Ages by Priscian - two schools which had for so long remained separate.

### 1.1 Greece.

The Greeks began their grammatical theory and practice from nothing; we must honour their curiosity about the world about them which started them speculating on the nature of language and thereby building up a framework of grammatical studies which eventually became the basis for most grammatical studies carried on in the West, an inheritance which has lasted until modern times. We may criticise them for what would be considered mistakes according to the modern view (1), but to disparage them for this would be to lose sight of the tremendous importance and originality of their achievements.

By the middle of the 5th century B.C., philosophical and grammatical studies were not yet separate, although they were clearly accepted as parts of the general body of knowledge. The earliest records of grammatical writing in Europe go back to the Pre-Socratic philosophers; another influence at this

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1) R.H. Robins, Ancient and Mediaeval Grammatical Theory in Europe, p.46. This work will be referred to frequently, and will therefore be abbreviated to A. & M. in all future references to it. Similarly, R.H. Robins, Dionysius Thrax and the Western Grammatical Tradition, T.P.S. (1957), 67-106 which will also be frequently referred to, will in future be referred to as Thrax. Most of the details of Greek and Roman contributions to grammatical theory have been obtained from these two works.



time was that of the Rhetoricians who brought a pragmatical interest into the investigation of the nature and function of language (1). Beginning with these two groups, we are able to trace the creation and development of grammatical description and classification from its beginnings to its codification by the late Latin grammarians Donatus and Priscian. (2).

It is said of Plato that he "first considered the potentialities of grammar" (3). Plato's contribution to a theory of language and a system of grammatical description was the segregation of the noun and the verb; this he justified, however, on logical or philosophical grounds and not on formal, linguistic grounds.

Plato referred to the noun as that of which some action or condition was predicated and the verb as what was predicated of it. For this reason the adjective, which is formally akin to the noun was treated by Plato as a verb since it would be used as a predicate (4). The importance of Plato's contribution to grammatical history and linguistic theory is that the first word-classes were built on logical and not formal linguistic criteria, and this logical domination of grammar has always been present throughout the history of grammar (5).

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1) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.11.

2) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.12.

3) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.17.

4) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.18.

5) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.18.



Grammar made great advances under Aristotle even though he had no systematic grammatical theory of his own; his thoughts on grammar, which derive from his logical and philosophical theories, are to be found scattered throughout his work. He made, however, one or two innovations; the word became for him the minimal meaningful unit (1), and he distinguished the meaning of the word as an isolated form from the meaning of the sentence. He divided words into nouns, verbs and what we might call conjunctions, but of these only nouns and verbs he considered 'full' parts of speech since they have meaning in isolation (2). As far as the noun is concerned, his theory of gender is more linguistic than most of his other grammatical work; he saw that gender does not conform rigidly to the physical categories of masculine, feminine, etc. (3). Of the verb, he was the first to deal with tense and part of his definition of the verb is that it indicates time. He insists however on meaning rather than formal characteristics as his criteria and on the function of the verb as a logical predicate; this means that the adjective continued to be treated as a member of the verb class since it will possess a similar logical function as predicate.

The Stoics were the last to deal with grammar as part of a general philosophical discipline and with them it made

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1) cf. Bloomfield's definition of the word as a "minimum free form"; L. Bloomfield, Language, p.178.

2) cf. also, H. Sweet, New English Grammar, p.22.

L. Tesnière, Esquisse d'une grammaire structurale, p.7.

3) R. L. Robins, A. & M., p.22.



important advances. Thereafter, though influenced by philosophy, grammar began to be studied as a separate branch of learning and continued to enjoy this independence until we come to the great synthesis of the Scholastics. The Stoics gave grammar a definite place in a wider scheme of general linguistic scholarship and for the first time we find scholars attempting to frame a general theory of language (1).

The Stoics at first referred to four parts of speech, noun, verb, conjunction and article; at a later stage they divided the noun into proper and common to make five parts of speech. They returned to the Platonic conception of the verb as a predicate and did not include time as a feature of their definition of the verb. A very important step was their recognition of the indeclinable parts as parts of speech in their own right, and they refused to condemn any part of speech as meaningless; the indeclinables came to be considered by them as binding together the discourse as a whole (2).

Another interesting feature of Stoic grammatical theory was their treatment of 'secondary features' (3), of what is traditionally known as 'accidents', i.e. number in the verb and noun, gender and case in the noun, voice, mood and tense in the verb. The category of case owes its very existence to the Stoics, and it is Stoic case theory which dominates the history of case theory in European grammatical writing up

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1) R.L.Robins, A. & M., p.25.

2) R.L.Robins, A. & M., p.29.

3) R.L.Robins, A. & M., p.30.



to the 20th century (1). They limited the use of the term to various formally different endings of the noun; they were thus able to assign the adjective to the noun class where it remained throughout the remainder of the ancient world and during the mediaeval world, and also to segregate the participle from the verb which led later grammarians to treat the participle as a separate word-class (2). This does not pretend to be a complete summary of Stoic grammatical theory but refers only to those factors which have some bearing on mediaeval grammatical theories.

The next group of Greek grammarians to be considered were the Alexandrians who can be considered specialist grammarians rather than philosophers of grammar (3); they introduced a new factor into grammatical study, a consciousness of their literary past and the divergence between the spoken Greek of their day and classical literary Greek.

This school of grammarians is best represented by Dionysius Thrax and by Apollonius Dyscolus (4). Thrax is very typical of the new style of grammarian; for him grammar had the practical purpose of preserving the Greek language

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1) L. Helmslev, La Catégorie des Cas, p.13.

2) R.H. Robins, A. & M., pp.31-2.

3) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.36

4) Thrax lived in the first century B.C. and Apollonius some 200 years later: both were members of the scholarly world of Alexandria.



from decay, and this definition of grammar was to give an emphasis to literature in contrast to colloquial speech which has persisted in grammatical studies up to modern times (1).

His work begins with what we might call the phonetics of Greek; he then describes the eight parts of speech, and this statement of grammar in terms of eight parts is one of the noteworthy developments among Alexandrian and post-Stoic grammarians. Certain features in Thrax's work are worthy of note since, as we have already pointed out, much of Thrax passed via Priscian into mediaeval grammatical theory. Proper and common nouns came to be considered members of the same word-class: the noun-class also came to be considered as including the adjective and throughout antiquity and the mediaeval period the adjective never achieved independent status as a word-class in its own right. As for case, Thrax, like the other Alexandrian grammarians, appears to have adopted the Stoic system and the vocative came to be considered an integral part of case inflection (2). Thrax is much more linguistic than any of his predecessors; his word-classes are defined in formal terms either of morphology or syntax, and whenever he uses meaning as part of his criteria, he sticks to notional means<sup>ing</sup>, and avoids all forms of philosophical abstractions (3). The one real gap in his work is the absence of any section on syntax.

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1) R.L. Robins, A. & M., p.39

2) Hjelmslev is particularly severe on Thrax on this account; cf. La Catégorie des Cas, p.4.

3) R.L. Robins, A. & M., p.41.



This gap was filled by Apollonius whose work forms, even though much has been lost, the most complete treatment of Greek in the ancient world; Priscian too based his work on Apollonius. In one sense, however, he marks a retrograde step since he uses logical criteria rather than formal criteria to define his parts of speech (1). On the other hand he did improve on Thrax's definition of the conjunction which is now defined in terms of its function, i.e. that of joining syntactically other parts of speech. He also set down in a relatively permanent form the semantic and grammatical functions of Greek case inflection (2).

"We have seen grammar develop from within general philosophical speculation and the study of rhetoric, and we have observed in outline the growth from its beginnings of a framework of terminology or categorical system in which to state the structure of grammar of the Greek language as the Greeks saw it" (3).

Alexandrian grammatical theory is of course open to serious criticism that literature and the language of the learned world were its only models; coupled with this is the fact that they possess no sound linguistic theory within which they could construct a grammatical system. Language for them was considered too much the expression of thought, and

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1) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.43

2) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.43

3) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.44



language in other contexts was largely ignored (1).

Such criticism is made from the standpoint of history: we must honour the Greeks for laying the foundation in grammatical theory, on which so much has, since their day, been constructed.

## 1.2 Rome

It is well known that the Romans admired the Greeks for their achievements in original thought, though it was the Roman genius for organisation that protected these Greek achievements in more abstract fields. As far as grammar is concerned, the Romans had an entirely different task from that of the Greeks, since there was by their time a body of knowledge and a fairly systematic approach to the formulation of this knowledge.

There were two alternatives open to the Romans: first, they could apply the Greek system to Latin, or else they could use the work of the Greeks to build up a grammatical statement for Latin in terms of Latin (2): most Latin grammarians however chose to copy the Greek system and apply it to Latin. It was this lack of originality which makes Latin achievements in the field of grammar pale in contrast to the work of the Greek grammarians.

The only Latin grammarian of any originality was Varro (3), but he does not appear to have had any influence on mediaeval grammarians, so that it would not be relevant to dwell on his

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1) cf. J.R. Firth, Papers in Linguistics, for a contextual approach to language.

2) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.48.

3) Varro lived in the 1st century B.C.: he may not have been the first Roman grammarian, but it is with Varro that the study of grammar by the Romans really begins.



theories in a summary statement of ancient and mediaeval grammatical theory such as this. Varro seems to have been a person capable of original thought; he was fully aware of Greek grammatical work and so approaches his subject from the knowledge of two language structures. He took over the terminology and categories of the Greeks, but he did test them for Latin, so that he did not force Latin into a mould made for another language (1). Varro set up three divisions in language study; etymology, morphology, and syntax, though he did not use these terms. The fact worthy of mention here is that he used formal criteria to describe the words and word-divisions of Latin, dividing them first into variable and invariable words, a sound beginning to the grammatical analysis of any language (2).

It is, however, difficult to make any complete assessment of Varro's importance in the history of the grammatical writing of the period under review, since he seems, as we have just said, to have had little if any influence on mediaeval grammarians, and his work has not come down to us complete.

After Varro and up to the time of the Late Latin grammarians, there were various writers on grammar, e.g. Caesar and Quintilian, but few of any real interest, and

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1) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.51

2) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.54



mention is merely made en passant of them at this stage, since they showed little inventiveness, and preferred to adopt the pattern of the Greeks.

There is however one item of significance to their credit and that is their recognition of the interjection as a separate part of speech, but this is almost their only original contribution: in general grammatical theory they added nothing.

"It is for the work of the Latin grammarians of the later period of the Empire from about the third century A.D. onward that Latin linguistic scholarship is principally famous. Numerous treatises on Latin grammar have come down to us from this period, of which probably the most famous are those of Donatus (c.A.D.400) and Priscian (c.A.D.500)" (1).

Their intellectual climate was not unlike that of the Alexandrians; there was a growing consciousness of their literary past and the desire to preserve the 'purity' of Latin of the classical period (2). These Late Latin grammarians were not, as far as linguistic and grammatical theories were concerned, innovators but were content to follow and collate the work of their predecessors, especially their Greek predecessors (3). Donatus and Priscian can therefore be taken as illustrative of this period of grammatical work, and their importance is further enhanced by their influence on the grammarians of the Middle Ages, since their work became the accepted text-books of the Middle Ages.

1) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.61.

2) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.62.

3) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.62.



Donatus taught in Rome during the 4th century A.D.; he wrote his "Ars Grammatica" with a definite didactic purpose, and furthermore wrote a shorter version of it for younger students. His procedure was to begin with what we would call today phonetics; he then dealt with the syllable, verse metre, accentuation and the parts of speech; finally he added an account of the faults in sentence construction which are to be avoided.

Priscian is a much more prominent figure: his grammar survived in more than a thousand manuscripts which is striking testimony to its popularity. He taught in Constantinople during the 6th century A.D.

His grammar is an immensely long work and must be considered the culmination of Late Latin grammatical work (1). He makes meaning his main criterion in grammar, arguing that only by meaning can the different parts of speech be distinguished (2), but in actual fact kept to the more formal classification of the Alexandrians. For this reason we can look upon Priscian's grammatical statement as being semi-formal; despite the fact that he made meaning his main criterion, he does not make his definitions of the parts of speech according to any consistent principle, so that we can find, as well as meaning, criteria such as formal structure and at times even

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1) R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.64

2) Priscian (ii, 16-17): non aliter possunt discerni a se partes orationis nisi uniuscuiusque proprietates significationem attendamus.



philosophical abstractions (1). Nevertheless, his is the most complete grammar we have from the ancient world, but in precision and consistency of theory it does not compare to Thrax's work on which it is, by admission, based; it includes a section on syntax and from the pedagogical point of view, which was clearly the dominant point of view in the earlier Middle Ages when his grammar and Donatus's shorter work achieved their greatest popularity, Priscian's work is a complete statement of the facts of Latin.

The Late Latin grammarians had little new to offer, but they do give a careful summary and compilation of the facts and details of Latin grammar by means of the descriptive systems created by previous scholars (2). This criticism should not be interpreted as belittling their achievements which were great and lasting; they built the foundations on which mediaeval and modern scholars could know, develop and criticise classical grammar, and which enabled Western scholars to keep alive, during the early Middle Ages, the study of literature and other scholarly pursuits.

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1) R. H. Robins, A. & M., p.67.

2) R. H. Robins, A. & M., p.67.



### 1.3 Middle Ages

Grammar held a position of real importance in the programme of studies in the Middle Ages. The Liberal Arts(1), of which there were seven, were divided into the Trivium and Quadrivium (2): grammar was the first subject of the Trivium and naturally assumed the position of prerequisite to all the Liberal Arts, being the necessary study for the reading and writing of the universal (3) language of learning, Latin. Grammar came to be studied for its own sake as part of human culture, and for the study of classical authors and particularly of the Latin Bible (4).

The Middle Ages are often divided into two periods, the first going up to the 12th century, and the second to the Renaissance. Such a division is of course artificial, but it was in the 12th century that certain influences were experienced which were to have a profound effect on mediaeval grammatical theories.

The first period was formative and contains little of interest in the history of grammar since it merely uses former theories and methods based on Donatus and Priscian. Latin was

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- 1) There is a wealth of literature on the Seven Liberal Arts, cf. Chapter II, p. 34.
  - 2) These terms are attributed, in the first place, to Boethius, cf. R. Roos, Die Modi Significandi des Martinus de Dacia. (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, Band 37, Heft 2), Copenhagen, 1952, p. 76: this work is referred to frequently throughout this thesis and for ease of reference it will in future be listed as Die Modi Significandi.
  - 3) In the mediaeval sense of the term.
  - 4) R. E. Robins, A. & M., p. 70.



the only classical language used, since Greek was largely unknown and the only Greek works known to the early Middle Ages were those which had survived in Latin translations.

The period from the 12th century to the Renaissance is significant in the history of grammar, in terms of both grammatical theory and grammatical method; this coincides with the rediscovery of those works of Aristotle, which were not already known to the Scholastics in Latin translation, and of other Greek philosophers, along with commentaries by Arab and Jewish philosophers (1). The effect of this development was to bring grammar under the control of logic and metaphysics, and rules of grammar were now derived and justified by recourse to logic and metaphysical theories of reality.

It is possible to discern two lines of grammatical thought in the Middle Ages, and these two trends continue the philosophical and literary traditions of the ancient world. The literary tradition, however, comes to an end in the 13th century (2), and from then on to the Renaissance, philosophical grammar becomes the dominant trend. We have seen that in ancient Greece, Alexandrian grammarians based their grammatical theory and method on the study of literature: in the time of

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1) cf. Chapter II.

2) Grammar prior to the 13th Century might be considered an equivalent term to 'philology': after this period, grammar comes closer to its modern equivalent i.e. as part of linguistic science. The struggle between literature and logic in the universities of the 13th century has been well reported in Henri d'Andeli's poem "La bataille des sept arts".



the Late Latin grammarians we found a similar insistence on the study of literature as the model for the grammarian. This use of literature as a model for grammar was bequeathed to the Middle Ages by Priscian, the last of the 'literary' grammarians of the ancient world, so that the mediaeval schools based their grammatical teachings on the literary grammars of Priscian and other grammarians of a similar type (1), until literary grammar came to be superseded by philosophical grammar in the 12th century and onwards (2).

There are two grammars which merit mention at this stage: they are the "Doctrinale" of Alexander de Villa-Dei (c.1200) (3) and the "Graecismus" of Eberhardus Bethuniensis (c.1220) (4), which were typical of the type of literary grammar introduced in this period; Alexander's work achieved an enormous popularity, and eventually succeeded in superseding the grammars of Donatus and Priscian as a teaching manual. Written in verse, its purpose was didactic and was designed for students whose mother tongue was not Latin: it retained its popularity throughout the later Middle Ages, but makes no attempt to justify grammatical rules nor does it contain any theorising about grammatical doctrine. Its interest lies purely in the part it played as a teaching manual and its value in the history of grammatical writing can be largely ignored.

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1) e.g. Alexander de Villa-Dei, *Doctrinale*.

2) This must not be interpreted that Priscian disappeared from Mediaeval schools: he may have been superseded in the later Middle Ages by Alexander's *Doctrinale* as a students' teaching grammar, but he remained the principle source for all the philosophical and speculative grammarians of the 13th and 14th centuries.

3) ed. D. Reichling (*Monumenta Germaniae Paedagogica* VII).

4) ed. J. Wrobel (*Corpus grammaticorum medii aevi*).



The great achievements in mediaeval grammatical work date from the rediscovery of Aristotle's logical and philosophical works; the effect of this change in the scholarly life of the Middle Ages was to produce an entirely different approach to grammar. Instead of grammar being studied as a key to knowledge of classical literature and the Bible, it became a branch of speculative philosophy (1), and grammar was now justified, not by illustration from classical literature, but by systems of logic and metaphysical theories of reality. Grammar, i.e. normative grammar, continued to be taught, hence the popularity of Alexander's "Doctrinale" as a teaching manual, but throughout the period, there is an increasing rift between pedagogical grammar and philosophical treatises on grammatical theory, until normative grammar is entirely superseded by philosophical grammar.

There are three stages in this logicisation of grammar, though it must not be imagined that these stages can be fitted into neatly separated compartments.

The first stage can be said to begin with Peter Helias who taught in Paris during the 12th century: his exact position

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1) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.75.



is open to some dispute (1), but he can be looked upon as one of the first to bring to a commentary on Priscian's grammar an interpretation based on Aristotelian logic and philosophy. Peter's importance was that he began the systematisation of the theories of his predecessors (2); another reason for considering Peter Helias to be such an important figure is that he provides an excellent terminus a quo in establishing the change in emphasis in mediaeval grammatical writing (3). Grabmann had no doubts in his mind about the importance of Peter Helias (4), and whatever his position among his contemporaries, there is no doubt about the attitude of the Modistae towards him (5). It seems safe to say that Peter

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- 1) cf. R.W. Hunt, Studies in Priscian in the 11th and 12th centuries. Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies II (1950), 1-56: Hunt argues that Peter does not stand alone in his period and that he should not be considered as the man responsible for the introduction of logical considerations into grammar.
  - 2) cf. R.W. Hunt, Studies in Priscian in the 11th and 12th centuries, Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies, II, 32.
  - 3) Little is known about him; he is known to have been teaching in Paris ca. 1150, (cf. J.E. Tolson), and to have been alive in 1166, but that is all: The Summa of Petrus Helias on Priscian Institutiones Grammaticae, XVII & XVIII (Unpublished thesis), p. xviii-xx.
  - 4) M. Grabmann, Die geschichtliche Entwicklung der mittelalterlichen Sprachphilosophie und Sprachlogik. Ein Überblick. Mélanges Joseph de Ghellinck S.J. (Tome II), Gembloux, 421-433: "Was Abaelard für die Dialektik, Petrus Lombardus für die Theologie, Gratian für das Kirchenrecht war, das war Petrus Helias für die Grammatik, und zwar in ihrem sprachlogischen Ausrichtung".
  - 5) I find an analogy between Peter Helias's position in the grammatical world of the Middle Ages and de Saussure's position as the 'father' of modern linguistics: it is possible to make a similarly tentative comparison between mediaeval speculative grammar and modern linguistic science - once freed from the restrictions of literature and other disciplines, they have both shown extraordinary vitality. It would perhaps be dangerous to carry the analogy further.



Helias's teaching in Paris along with the impetus given to speculative scholarship in logic and philosophy not only provided the spur to the study of a subject which was already established as part of the Arts curriculum, but it in fact encouraged speculation with a new bias on the nature of language and grammar.

There is a gap in our knowledge of the development of grammatical theory between the time of Peter Helias and the Modistae some 100-150 years later. The second stage, which covers the gap between Peter Helias and the Modistae, can be thought of as a period of consolidation; this period is, of course, the golden age of mediaeval scholasticism, and is the period when leading philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas (1) Robert Grosseteste, Albertus Magnus, logicians such as William of Sherwood, Petrus Hispanus and Lambert of Auxerre, and grammarians such as Robert Kilwardby, Jordan of Saxony, Nicholas de Paris - all of whom wrote commentaries on Priscian -

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- 1) Thomas Aquinas must be considered as one of the immediate predecessors of the Modistae: Mantley (Die Sprachphilosophie des hl. Thomas von Aquin und ihre Anwendung auf Probleme der Theologie, Paderborn 1937) argues that Thomas cannot have known most of the work of the Modistae, since John of Dacia did not complete his Summa grammatica until 1280, and Siger, Thomas of Erfurt, Jean Josse de Marvilla, did not write their grammatical works until the 14th century. Thomas must, however, have been aware of certain developments in the field of speculative grammar, since Roos tells us (p.134) that Martin wrote his treatise before Aquinas's second stay in Paris, but it is not possible to state to what extent there may be mutual influence between them. Mention at this length is made here to illustrate the flimsiness of our philological knowledge of this period of intense intellectual activity.



and Roger Bacon (1), were active in creating and developing their theories in the light of the new knowledge. Of this period of grammatical history, it is possible only to make general statements about trends and developments; by the 13th century, therefore, lectures on grammar with a logico-philosophical bent were part of the teaching programme in the Faculty of Arts in Paris, the texts used, according to Grabmann (2), being the commentaries on Priscian of Jordan of Saxony, Nicholas de Paris, and Robert Kilwardby and in addition Kilwardby's grammatical Sophismata (3). It will be possible to say more of these personalities and to draw more positive conclusions about the development of grammatical theory during this period when the philology of the period is better known (4).

- 1) Roger Bacon (and indeed Robert Kilwardby too) were much more than grammarians, but have been included in this context because of their grammatical activities. Roger Bacon, considered by Grabmann to be the author of the first of the speculative grammars, is mentioned at this stage since he cannot be thought of as one of the Modistae but rather as one of their immediate precursors.
- 2) Grabmann, M., Mittelalterliches Geistesleben, Vol. I., p. 118.
- 3) Kilwardby was a scholar and grammarian of considerable stature, but as his grammatical work remains unedited, it is not possible for the historian of grammar to make a proper assessment of his contribution to grammatical theory. Roos reports (Die Modi Significandi, p. 123) that Martin of Dacia knew and used Kilwardby's commentaries on Priscian; there is no overt suggestion, i.e. no textual reference, in either Siger or Thomas that either of them used Kilwardby's work, unless some of the references to the 'grammatici antiqui' are in fact references to Kilwardby. Presumably, however, they knew his work which was written during the first half of the 13th century.
- 4) A most serious gap is the fact that Kilwardby's commentaries and grammatical Sophismata are unedited: in addition, there are no critical editions of Peter Helias's commentaries on Priscian (apart from Tolson's unpublished edition of Peter's commentary on the Priscian Minor), or Jordan of Saxony's and Nicholas de Paris's commentaries on Priscian. Furthermore, there is no modern edition of Lambert of Auxerre's logical treatises, and of course a complete dearth of comparative studies on their grammatical theories.



Broadly speaking it seems that this period brought about a refinement in theory and terminology by the application of logical and philosophical criteria to grammatical description, and that it became the task, so to speak, of the third stage, to bring to fruition this preparatory work, in the shape of the theories of the speculative grammarians of the late 13th-14th centuries, i.e. the Modistae.

### 1.31 The Modistae

Grabmann states (1) that for the first time in the second half of the 13th century a new type of grammatical literature appeared, which sets out in a very systematic manner the philosophy and logic of language which Scholastic philosophers had been developing: these grammarians, who were at their height during the 13th-14th centuries, stated their theories in the form of treatises on the modes of signifying (*Summa Modorum Significandi*).

These writers of speculative grammarians have come to be known as 'Modistae' (2) but the state of our knowledge of them is slight, although Grabmann (3) and Lehmann (4) have, by

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- 1) Grabmann, M., *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*, Bd. I. p. 115-6.
  - 2) Grabmann states that the first modern use of the term 'Modistae' was by J. Møller in an article published in the "Anzeiger für deutsches Altertum". I have, so far, been unable to trace this article, and Father Roos, in private correspondence, informs me that he too has been unable to find the article.
  - 3) Grabmann, M., *Thomas von Erfurt und die Sprachlogik des mittelalterlichen Aristotelismus*. SB Munich, 1943.
  - 4) Lehmann, F., *Mitteilungen aus Handschriften VIII*: SB Munich, 1941.



indicating the extant manuscripts of their work, performed an invaluable service for the student of mediaeval grammar.

Grabmann mentioned by name twelve or thirteen grammarians (1), and Lehmann lists some ninety manuscripts of the writings of this group which suggests that they constitute quite an important group of grammarians, but since most of them are still unedited, it is difficult to say whether they can be considered a group or circle in the sense that one finds in the 20th century group of grammarians, e.g. the Prague, Copenhagen or New York Linguistic Circles.

Of the thirteen grammarians listed by Grabmann, the works of five are available in a fairly modern form, but are not to be found in critical editions; the closest that we have of a Modistic grammar in a modern critical edition is Wallerand's edition of Siger de Courtrai (2), and this dearth of a modern critical apparatus is, of course, a serious handicap to any investigation of the grammatical theories of the Modistae.

Martin of Dacia has, so far, appeared in one form, i.e. a transcript of one of the Venice MS was recently published,

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- 1) e.g. Siger de Courtrai, Thomas of Erfurt, Michel de Marbais, Jean Josse de Marvilla, Martin of Dacia, John of Dacia, Simon of Dacia, Boethius of Dacia, Johannes Aurifaber, John Avicula of Lotharingia, Matthew of Bononia, Radulfus Brito, Echardus Knab von Zwiefalten. This list obviously does not include the large number of anonymous treatises on speculative grammar.
  - 2) Wallerand, G., Les oeuvres de Siger de Courtrai. (Les Philosophes Belges, Tome VIII), Louvain, 1913.



but not very satisfactorily (1), but this cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be considered a critical edition, since it refers to only one of the twenty manuscripts listed by Roos (2). There is no edition at all available of Michel de Marbais; extracts only are to be found in Thurot's monumental work (3) but he did not use all the manuscripts available since he restricted himself deliberately to those MSS which are to be found in French libraries. Wallerand, in his edition of Siger de Courtrai, refers to eight manuscripts but only one of these contains his grammatical treatise which is incomplete (4); Grabmann and Lehmann do not list any other manuscript of Siger. John of Dacia's Summa Grammatica was

- 1) cf. Rivista Critica di Storia della Filosofia XI (1956), 174-205: 312-39.
- 2) Roos, H., Die Modi Significandi, pp.13-40.
- 3) Thurot, Ch., Notices et extraits de divers manuscrits latins pour servir à l'histoire des doctrines grammaticales au moyen âge. Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale, Tome XXII. Paris, 1868.
- 4) Scholars writing on Siger de Courtrai, e.g. Thurot, have stated that his work is incomplete; Wallerand disputes this, and referring to Thurot's statement, that "le copiste n'a pas continué, il ne donne pas la suite du pronom, non plus, que l'adverbe, la préposition et l'interjection, mais il a ajouté le complément des traités de Siger, les discussions que Siger appelle 'sophismata'" (Notices et extraits, p.41): Wallerand argues that the author, i.e. Thurot, "ne nous semble pas avoir saisi le plan de l'oeuvre de Siger", and continues: "dans la partie suivie de son traité 'De modis significandi', Siger ne traite que des parties déclinales du discours. Dans le 'sophisma': 'O Magister', la discussion montre sur le vif la nécessité des parties indéclinables... Cette incident ne prouve-t-elle pas que Siger réservait, pour la traiter à propos de ce 'sophisma', cette partie de la grammaire dont il n'a encore rien dit." (p.31). The inescapable fact is that Siger's treatment of the pronomen is incomplete, that his discussion of the indeclinable partes is not nearly so detailed as Thomas's, and he lacks a section on syntax, though he does refer at the end of his discussion of the nomen to a projected section on syntax.



recently published (1) but his work is incomplete and contains only his preamble and the section on the nomen. There is no modern critical edition available of Thomas of Erfurt's Grammatica Speculativa: the edition used for this study was published in 1902 (2), but is attributed to Duns Scotus (3); the editor was clearly unaware of the extant MS which Grabmann and Lehmann have listed, and bases his version of the text on Wadding's edition of the collected works of Duns Scotus published in 1639. The remainder of the works of the Modistae remain unpublished.

There is little evidence available to suggest that the  
 \* Modistae were anything so <sup>c</sup>cohesive as a group, except that the four grammarians who are referred to in this thesis do present a doctrine which in essentials is very much the same, although their actual presentations do vary a great deal. Roger Bacon, described by Grabmann as the first author of a speculative

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- 1) John of Dacia, Summa Grammatica (ed. A. Otto), Copenhagen 1955.
  - 2) J. Duns Scotus, Grammaticae Speculativae (ed. Fr. Mariani Fernandez Garcia). Quaracchi, 1902.
  - 3) The 'grammatica speculativa', which was for so long attributed to Duns Scotus and which has also been thought to be the work of Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus, is now generally accepted to be the work of Thomas of Erfurt; Grabmann has explained at great length his argument for assigning this work to Thomas of Erfurt, cf:  
 M. Grabmann, De Thoma Erfordiensis auctore Grammaticae quae Joanni Duns Scoto adseribitur speculativae. Archivum franciscanum historicum (1922), 273-7.  
 M. Grabmann, Mittelalterliches Geistesleben, Vol. I., 118-25.  
 M. Grabmann, Thomas von Erfurt und die Sprachlogik des mittelalterlichen Aristotelismus. SB Munich, 1943.



grammar, produced his "Summa Grammatica" about 1245 (1); he may not be one of the Modistae, but as Roos says (2), his work represents a valuable starting-point for dating the work of the Modistae. Martin of Dacia, according to Roos (3), probably wrote his grammatical treatise about 1250, but Siger and Thomas did not write their grammars until the first half of the 14th century (4); little seems to be known about Michel de Marbais - Leclerc (5) offers a tentative date, i.e. ca. 1300 for his death, which would place him among the earlier Modistae. It is possible to see, even in the few works available to us, the effect of the time-factor on their work, but it must be stressed that this is a matter of organisation and not of doctrine. Martin of Dacia's work does <sup>not</sup> possess the refinements of Thomas of Erfurt's descriptive method, e.g. the clearly labelled divisions of Etymologia and Diasynthetica (6) are absent from Martin's grammar and similarly he does not use the clearly defined pattern of the generalissimus, subalternus, and specialissimus modes to describe the essential mode of a pars orationis (7).

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- 1) There is a possibility that Martin of Dacia may have known Roger Bacon in Paris, but it seems most unlikely that either Siger or Thomas knew him.
  - 2) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p.129
  - 3) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p.134.
  - 4) Siger took his Master of Arts in 1309, and presumably wrote his treatise some time after he had begun to teach, probably between 1309 and 1320. Grabmann suggests that the adult portion of his life was spent in the 14th century, and he probably died about 1350.
  - 5) V. Leclerc, Michel de Roubaix on de Brabant, Grammairien. Histoire littéraire de la France XXI (1847), 267-71.
  - 6) cf. 5.0, 5.1, and 5.2.
  - 7) cf. 4.244, and also p. 183 .



The Modistae can be thought of as the second generation of speculative grammarians who sought to codify and refine the pioneer work of scholars such as Peter Helias, Petrus Hispanus, Robert Kilwardby, etc. The Modistae and their immediate precursors represent a great synthesis of two lines of thought which can be traced back to ancient Greece and which have passed down unbroken to the Middle Ages: on the one hand we have what can be called logico-philosophical grammar dating from Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, and on the other hand we have literary grammar dating from Thrax and Apollonius which was handed down to the mediaeval world by Donatus and Priscian.

The philosophical background of the Modistae led them to believe that grammar had its basis outside language itself; they claimed therefore that there was one universal grammar dependent on the structure of reality (1), and that the rules of grammar were quite independent of the language in which they were expressed (2). There was one grammatical system fixed and valid for all languages but which the philosopher of language alone is able to discover (3). In making their grammatical theory, the

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- 1) This can be considered a retrograde step: Peter Helias had realised that there are as many grammatical systems as there are languages, cf. R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.77.
  - 2) cf. L.Hjelmslev, Principes de grammaire générale, p.268: the great difference of course between Modistic theory of a general grammar and Hjelmslev's theory is that the Modistae constructed their theory on extra-Linguistic facts based on the structure of reality, whereas Hjelmslev sought to found his theory on formal linguistic criteria, i.e. "une théorie du système morphologique du langage", L.Hjelmslev, Principes, p.3.
  - 3) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.79.



Modistae kept the grammatical system of Donatus and Priscian more or less intact, but restated the parts of speech and their accidents in semantic terms (which they considered to be a new grammatical theory), using a terminology which they had derived from the metaphysical and logical theories of their contemporaries; they all seemed unaware of the fact that such theories were in fact a projection into reality of the basic patterns of the language in which they were expressed (1).

The Modistae did not add a great deal to grammatical theory; for the grammatical historian, the great interest of the Modistae is not ~~their~~ <sup>so much</sup> their contribution to grammatical theory but the evidence they give of the tenor of the thought of their day. A grammatical theory must be considered not only in terms of its own intrinsic value but also as an expression of the intellectual climate which produced it. In this sense the Modistae are admirable representatives of certain aspects of mediaeval achievement (2).

This very brief summary brings the account of the history of grammatical theory up to the 14th century. The purpose of this study is to examine the theories of the Modistae, especially their theories and descriptions of the partes orationis, and to assess these theories in terms of mediaeval and modern grammatical theories. One of de Saussure's most important contributions to modern linguistic theory was the distinction

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1) R.F.Robins, A. & M., p.87.

2) R.F.Robins, A. & M., p.90.



he made between synchronic and diachronic linguistics (1); a justification of this study is that there is a synchrony and diachrony in grammatical theory as well as in grammar itself, and this study is the examination of one stage of grammatical theory abstracted from the general history of grammar. (2).

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- 1) F. de Saussure, Cours de linguistique générale, pp. 114-140.
  - 2) In de Saussure's language, we might say that this study is one of a certain 'état de grammaire'.



## Chapter II

### 2.0 The Mediaeval Background.

At the end of the preceding chapter, it was stated that one reason for attaching any importance to a study of the Modistae was the information they provided about the tenor of the thought of their day. This chapter aims at a brief account of the academic and intellectual background of the Modistae which should enable us to see more clearly how they reflect the scholarly atmosphere of their day and also to assess their own contributions to the scholarship of the Middle Ages.

The description of this background will be in two parts, though there is of course a close connection between them. We must remember that the Modistae were teachers of grammar as well as creators of a grammatical theory, and it is therefore important to see something of the position of grammar in the general pedagogy of the 12th and 13th centuries. The Modistae reflected the spirit of their age, and the one factor which seems to have dominated the whole atmosphere of the Faculties of Arts in mediaeval universities was the pervading influence of the 'new' logical and philosophical theories which had followed upon the rediscovery of Aristotelian and other Greek philosophy, so long lost to the West, by means of the translations and commentaries of Arabic and Jewish scholars, which came to Europe via Spain and also by means of direct access to original sources (1).

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1) Thomas Aquinas is known to have used translations made directly from the Greek.



We shall see that these logical theories invaded grammar and the teaching of grammar, to the extent of excluding 'literary' grammar and its concomitant study of literature almost entirely from the programme of studies in northern Europe in the later Middle Ages.

The second section of this chapter, therefore, seeks to describe certain features of mediaeval philosophy which affected the grammatical theories of the Modistae. An account of mediaeval philosophy, or of mediaeval logic or metaphysics should not be looked for, nor will any account of the introduction of Aristotelian philosophy be given (1). This section on mediaeval philosophy will discuss those aspects which were used by the Modistae in establishing their grammatical theories - in particular, the problem of universals, and the theory and particularly the terminology of hylomorphism which, especially in Thomas, dominated their descriptive procedure.

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- 1) Gilson has stated that the invasion of the University of Paris by the doctrines of Aristotle is a well-known fact but that we are still far from knowing with precision the details, cf. E. Gilson, The History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages, p.312. It is no part of this thesis to add to the confusion.



## 2.1 Grammar in the Middle Ages

The study of grammar in the Middle Ages enjoyed, as already shown (1), a particularly privileged position, which it achieved not only because of its intrinsic importance but because it became the key to what the mediaevals considered higher forms of learning, i.e. dialectics and theology. As one modern scholar has suggested, the study of grammar is an important source of knowledge about the Middle Ages: "if we neglect grammatical theory, we are cutting ourselves off from an important source for understanding the thought of the 11th and 12th centuries. At that time everyone had to study grammar, and it was regarded as the 'foundation and root' of all teaching. Its influence is as pervasive as that of logic and may be seen in unexpected places, in theology and even more in logic itself; no study of the logical doctrine of the early 12th century would be adequate which did not take account of Priscian and of the glossators of his work" (2).

The year 1000 marks the transition from one of the darkest centuries to a period of progress culminating in the intellectual revival of the 12th century (3); this period coincided with the encouragement given to learning by Charlemagne, one of his greatest services being the encouragement given to the study of grammar (4). During this period,

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1) cf. 1.3, p.16

2) R.W.Hunt, Studies in Priscian in the 11th and 12th centuries, I. p.194.

3) J.E.Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, Vol.I, p. 514.

4) G.Wallerand, Siger de Courtrai, p. (34).



however, grammar as a science made no progress; grammar was defined and practised as the art of speaking and writing correctly and the art of interpreting the poets (1), the textbooks used being the grammars of Donatus and Priscian.

The second period of learning in the Middle Ages, the so-called "Renaissance of the 12th century" (2) during which time grammar came to be regarded as a prerequisite for all scholarship, dates from the middle of the 12th century and can be thought of as continuing up to the end of the 13th century, a period which culminated, as far as the history of grammar is concerned, in the complete philosophy of language of the Modistae (3). Four important and closely connected facts characterise the intellectual history of this period:

- a) the discovery of Aristotle and the concomitant introduction of logic into grammar:
- b) the influence of Peter Helias:
- c) the triumph of the grammarians over the humanistic schools of the 'authors', i.e. the struggle between Orleans and Chartres, the home of the study of classical literature, against the rising influence of logic in the schools of Paris (4):
- d) the constitution of speculative grammar embodying the new knowledge which followed upon the rediscovery of Aristotle's

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1) Quintilian: recte loquendi scientia, poetarum enarratio.

2) C.F.Haskins, The Renaissance of the 12th Century.

3) G. Wallerand, Siger de Courtrai, p.(34).

4) This is well described in Henri d'Andeli's allegorical poem "La Bataille des Sept Arts," edited by L.J.Paetow, The Battle of the Seven Arts (Memoirs of the University of California, Vol.IV), 1914.



philosophical works and which culminated in the treatises on the modes of signifying (*Summa modorum significandi*) of the Modistae.

Education in the Middle Ages was organised and comprised in the Seven Liberal Arts (1), which were divided into the Trivium, consisting of *Grammar, Rhetoric and Logic, and the Quadrivium consisting of* Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy; this programme of studies was a legacy from the ancient world (2).

The studies of the Quadrivium were concerned with the acquisition of knowledge, but the Trivium did not aim at the acquiring of knowledge but rather at the ordering of experience - they provided the means for giving expression to what was known (3). The courses in the Trivium represent man's need for expression, the impulse to know, to formulate one's conceptions and to express them consistently (4). In the Middle Ages, grammar was the first, indispensable means to this end (5).

In the earlier Middle Ages, the study of grammar carried with it the serious study of literature, and Latin literary studies in northern France in the first half of the 12th century promised to lead to a great revival of classical

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- 1) E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa vom Viten Jahrhundert vor Christ bis in die Zeit der Renaissance* (Vol. II) Berlin, 1898  
L.J. Paetow, *The Arts Course at Mediaeval Universities with special reference to Grammar and Rhetoric*. (The University of Illinois Studies, Vol. III., No. 7). Urbana, 1910.  
O. Willman, Arts, The Seven Liberal. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 1912. pp. 760-65.
  - 2) Willmann points to an interesting analogy between the Seven Liberal Arts of the ancient and mediaeval world in the West and the programme of studies in ancient India; cf. O. Willmann, Arts, The Seven Liberal. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, I (1912), p. 760.
  - 3) G. Leff, *Mediaeval Thought*, p. 50.
  - 4) H. O. Taylor, *The Mediaeval Mind*, p. 359.
  - 5) H. O. Taylor, *Op. cit.*, p. 361.



literary studies (1), and the writings of John of Salisbury suggest that the 12th century was well on the way to a real comprehension of classical civilisation. This was cut short by the growing interest in dialectical and theological studies which followed upon the rediscovery of ancient Greek philosophy, and the decline in the study of the classics and other literary pursuits can be attributed to the rise of dialectics to a position of undisputed eminence in the arts (2). By 1215, classical authors were absent from the Arts course in the University of Paris and by 1255, only Donatus and Priscian remained of the ancient Latin authors; the plain fact is that the classical literary tradition which had been so superbly fostered by the cathedral schools of Chartres and Orleans died of sheer starvation, because the speculative thinking, which the study of Aristotle produced, became too absorbing to allow the study of the classical authors to remain important (3). Grammar, the weather-vane of intellectual change, turned from the study of literature to a logical science, a speculative philosophical discipline, and its problems were no longer solved by reference to the best Latin literature but by logic (4). The liberation

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1) F.B.Artz, The Mind of the Middle Ages, p.433.

2) L.J.Paetow, The Arts Course at Mediaeval Universities, p.29.

3) L.J. Paetow, The Arts Course at Mediaeval Universities, p.29.

4) L.J. Paetow, The Arts Course at Mediaeval Universities, p.35.



of grammar from philological restraints, the influence of Aristotle and the commentaries of Arab scholars, produced a new orientation in grammatical studies: from being a pedagogical, normative subject, it became philosophical, theoretical, and speculative, and the introduction of logic made grammar the 'handmaid of the philosopher' (1).

From the 11th century, the cathedral school became the most important seat of education; in France, Chartres was probably the most important centre of humane studies, and for more than a century there was hardly a break in the succession of remarkable teachers; but by the early 12th century, Paris was becoming the centre of logical studies.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, the study of logic and its pervasion of grammar spread throughout northern Europe and the digestion of Aristotle's logic became the greatest intellectual task of the period (2). The progressive invasion of the University of Paris by the doctrine of Aristotle is a well known fact, but we are still far from knowing the details with any precision. There is a great difference, however, between grammar in northern Europe, and in France south of the Loire, ~~in the Alps~~ Italy and Spain; in northern Europe, particularly in Paris where humanistic tendencies had once been strongest, the reign of Aristotle became absolute (3) and by the 13th

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1) R.I. Robins, A. & M., p.89

2) R.W. Southern, The Making of the Middle Ages, p.181.

3) L.J. Paetow, The Arts Course at Mediaeval Universities, p.29.



century dialectics and theology had become the exclusive intellectual pursuits with grammar as a purely speculative science. In southern Europe, however, the pursuit and study of grammar and logic were subordinate to law, and the student cultivated them in order to speak and write Latin elegantly (1). Wallerand maintains, and criticises Paetow for not sufficiently stressing this fact (2) that the principal reason for the decline in classical studies can be attributed to the change in the nature of grammatical studies which became more and more speculative and deductive.

The contrast between the cathedral schools of Chartres and Orleans in the 12th century and the University of Paris in the 13th century demonstrates clearly the difference between the two periods: by the 13th century the University of Paris <sup>em</sup> emerged from the old cathedral school, and in the early years of its existence, as a result of the inheritance of Abelard and the advent of the new learning, it became the supreme seat throughout Europe of dialectic, metaphysics and theology (3).

The stimulus given to dialectic by Abelard reinforced by the knowledge of Aristotle's logic produced a marked change in the Trivium (4); the earlier 'trivium' had preserved a

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1) J.E.Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship, p. 666.

H.O.Taylor, The Mediaeval Mind, (Vol.I), p.251.

2) G.Wallerand, Op.cit., p.(39).

3) H.O.Taylor, Op.cit. (Vol.II), p.408-10.

4) G.Leff, Mediaeval Thought, p.169.



balance between logic on the one hand, and grammar and rhetoric on the other, but this was destroyed by the addition of new material to be mastered, so that there is less time and inclination left for the more leisurely study of grammar and literature (1): rhetoric virtually disappeared and grammar became no longer the guide to literary expression, but was instead governed by its logical aspects and absorbed in philosophy, devoted to the language of logic (2).

To the Parisian masters of the early 13th century, the discovery of Aristotle's philosophy meant a new and universally applicable method (3), and the whole field of intellectual endeavour, from grammar to theology was invaded by the notion of 'science', i.e. a necessary knowledge justified by strict demonstrations, together with the notion of 'art', i.e. a systematic body of principles and consequences.

The effect of this change on grammatical writing can be seen with unmistakable clarity in Roger Bacon and this can be considered the starting point of the evolution of this new approach to grammar (4). Bacon observed that in every language there are two sorts of problems, some proper to the language in question and others common to all language, e.g. what is a

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1) C.I.Haskins, Op.cit., p.355.

2) C.I.Haskins, Op.cit., p.135-7.

3) E.Gilson, History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages, p.312.

4) E. Gilson, Op.cit., p.312.



noun, verb, etc. The first sort could not become the object of scientific study, but the second could on account of their generality; <sup>u</sup>th~~is~~ conceived, grammar could become a science and be taught as true learning because its object was universal. Bacon therefore conceived the possibility of a general grammar, i.e. the general grammar of human language (1). This change of attitude to grammar led to a renewal of interest in grammatical study, which had seemed at one time ~~of being~~ in danger of being relegated to the position of just one of the seven liberal arts confined to its elementary task of teaching the Latin language for literary purposes (2). Men now sought to derive rules of grammar from logic and metaphysical theories of reality (3), and a concomitant of this increase in interest was an increase in output of grammatical writing culminating in the speculative grammars of the Modistae. Grammar remained fundamentally what it always had been in the Middle Ages, a grammatical statement of Latin, but the Modistae made of their grammars a study of the word-classes (*partes orationis*) and syntax of the idealised, perfect language, i.e. Latin, but their methods had by now evolved in a speculative and deductive sense.

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1) E.Gilson, Op.cit., p.313

2) C.F.Haskins, Op.cit., p.135

3) R.H.Robins, Op.cit., p.75.



## 2.2 Mediaeval Philosophy.

The 13th century marks the climax in the growth of the philosophical theories of the Middle Ages; the period 1210-1220 begins the development of an intellectual movement of extraordinary vitality. The growth of the University of Paris and its emergence as the main intellectual centre in northern France, to which we referred in the previous section of this chapter, the creation of two new religious orders, and their coming to Paris, the Dominicans in 1217 and the Franciscans in 1219 - they had a virtual monopoly of learning (1), and the recovery of Aristotle's works and their assimilation into the programme of studies, all gave added impetus to the change, and made of the 13th century a very different academic world from that of the 12th century.

In the previous chapter (2), it was stated that mediaeval grammarians constructed their theories of language according to their conception of reality, and therefore, if we are to understand this and its relation to their linguistic theories, we must try to understand their metaphysical theories by means of which they analysed this reality.

In the history of the intellectual life of the Middle Ages, a great deal of attention has been given to the Nominalist-Realist controversy, i.e. the problem of Universals. This is a problem which certainly exercised the minds of scholastic

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1) G. Leff, Op.cit., p.168.

2) cf. p.16.



philosophers but it was not a problem peculiar to the Middle Ages and was indeed one of the few legacies of ancient philosophy which came down directly to the West from the ancient world.

The problem refers to the relation between our universal conceptions and the external world which we come to know by means of these universal conceptions (1); what are the nature and status of general terms like 'animal' and 'man' in the actual world of individual animals and men? Were they simply mental concepts (words) or did they really exist (things) (2)? Do the objects of our concepts exist in nature or are they mere abstractions? Are they or are they not things? Those *who* argued in the affirmative were Realists, and those who argued in the negative were Nominalists. The Realists attributed to each genus and to each species a universal essence, a being of its own (3), to which all the subordinate individuals are tributary; the Nominalists asserted that the individual alone exists (4), arguing that the existence of a general word does not imply the existence of a general thing named by it and that therefore the universals are not things realised in the universal state in nature, but are merely intellectual representations, i.e. words.

Ancient and mediaeval philosophers took different stands on this problem, and these can be described as a) extreme realism,

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- 1) G.S.J.Curtis, A Short History of Western Philosophy in the Middle Ages. p.48.
  - 2) G. Leff, Mediaeval Thought from Saint Augustine to Ockham, p.104; this work has been extensively used in the preparation of this section.
  - 3) G. Leff, Op.cit., p.104.
  - 4) G. Leff, Op.cit., p.104.



b) Moderate realism, c) moderate nominalism (or conceptualism), and d) extreme nominalism (1). The extreme realist held that the common nature of a group of beings, e.g. man, exists 'ante res', i.e. distinct from and independently of the particular things which exemplify that common nature. The moderate realist argues that the universal is an objective principle 'in rebus', common to the many different individuals and thereby constituting them into a class. The moderate nominalist (or conceptualist) (2) held that the universals exist but only in thought as the concepts which unite the individual things which are members of the same genera or species (3), e.g. there is in the mind a general notion or idea of 'boats' - 'boat' is more than a sound with an arbitrary conventional meaning, but apart from the particular things to which it applies, it has no reality. The extreme nominalist held that not even in the thought of the knower is there anything general.

The great figure in the controversy in the period of interest to us was Abelard, and his theory of universals is of great importance, for, until the rise of Terminism in the 14th century,

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- 1) Various terms have been used to describe these categories; the term 'moderate realism' is used to describe Aquinas's position and 'moderate nominalism' (or conceptualism) to describe Abelard's position. The term 'terminism' is used and should be applied to Ockham since many scholars maintain that 'nominalism' in its extreme form did not occur in the Middle Ages. The term 'nominalism' is used, however, in this study to refer to the position of Roscelin (ca.1050-1125), often regarded as the first nominalist and whom Abelard often attacked.
  - 2) Curtis argues that the moderate nominalist of the Middle Ages was in fact protesting against Extreme Realism and would be more suitably described as an Anti-Realist.
  - 3) R.L. Poole, Illustrations in the History of Mediaeval Thought, p. 120.



his was with minor variations the accepted theory of the schools (1), and in the 13th century all the great scholastics solved the problem by the theories of moderate realism.

Abelard tried to discover the middle way between the realists and the nominalists; for him, the universals are neither things nor names, but concepts which are predicated of particulars. He argued, in answer to the realists, that the universals cannot be either things or words; universal nouns denote a common status abstracted from the particulars of a similar species or genus (2), and this must be so, otherwise there would be no difference between one individual and another. Genera and species must not be thought of as things (3). He also argued, in answer to the nominalist's argument that the universals were merely 'flatus vocis' signifying no reality, that these empty breathings are sounds and this fact makes them also things (4).

There were degrees of moderate realism in the 12th and 13th centuries, and it would be wrong to imagine for instance that Abelard and Aquinas took the same attitude towards the universals, though both have, at one time or another been described as moderate realists (5). The great difference between them was that for Abelard the universal was a logical category, whereas

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1) J.G. Sikes, Peter Abailard, p.106.

2) J.G. Sikes, Op.cit., p.105.

3) G. Leff, Op.cit., p.108.

4) J.G.Sikes, Op.cit., p.106.

5) G. Leff, Op.cit., p.111.



for Aquinas it was a metaphysical entity (1); for Abelard, the universal was never more than a concept of the mind and could only be located in the mind, but for Aquinas it corresponded with ultimate reality (2). But of much greater importance was the impetus that Abelard's solution gave to the autonomy of logic as the study of concepts independent of real things (3), and this was to have a profound effect on grammar in the 13th and 14th centuries (4).

The other feature of mediaeval philosophy which plays an important part in speculative grammar was the metaphysical theory of hylomorphism which the mediaevals derived from Aristotle and which, by means of the contrasts of substance-accident, matter-form and act-potentiality, seeks to analyse the world of substances. The Modistae built, as we have already said, their theory of language on the structure of reality and used hylomorphic theory to describe the continuity and discontinuity in a grammatical system and the descriptive procedure of such a system by means of the language of change and evolution (5) used to describe the non-static nature of reality. This metaphysical theory of hylomorphism was common property in the Middle Ages.

- 1) Thomas, cf. T.C. Thomas, History of the Schoolmen, p.121 states under Abelard, the Nominalists came to be called Conceptualists because, while maintaining that universals were but concepts of the mind, they insisted that such concepts were based on reality and not on mere fiction.
- 2) G. Leff, Op.cit., p.111
- 3) In this context compare Thomas of Erfurt's analysis of 'negatio etc. in the essential mode of the nomen; cf. 5.1111, p.219.
- 4) G. Leff, Op.cit., p.111.
- 5) M. de Wulf, Philosophy and Civilisation in the Middle Ages, p.199



For the mediaeval philosopher, metaphysics was the science of being, and is therefore an analysis of what exists or can exist; it will therefore consist of assertions about substances(1). Existence is affirmed primarily of a substance, and metaphysics is concerned therefore with the analyses of substances and their modifications or accidents (2). A substance is that of which we say primarily that it exists and which is not predicated of something else; an accident is that which exists only as a modification of a substance and which is predicated of a substance (3).

The distinction between substance and accident draws attention to two features of the world, i.e. permanence and change (4), and this is reinforced by the use of the contrast of matter and form. By using the substance-accident contrast, the metaphysician shows that a substance is capable of changing accidentally without altering its specific character (5). A tree grows and the colour of its leaves changes but we still speak of the same tree: but if it burns to ashes, we do not speak of the ashes as a tree. The matter of the tree has not been destroyed, - there is permanence and at the same time there

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- 1) F.C.Copleston, Aquinas, p.77: in the preparation of this section this work has been indispensable and is an excellent Introduction to mediaeval metaphysical theory.
  - 2) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.78.
  - 3) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.81.
  - 4) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.104.
  - 5) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.85.



is a change which is more than 'accidental'(1). This implies that "in every material thing of substance there are two distinguishable constitutive principles", substantial form and first matter (2).

In the case of the tree, the substantial form is the determining principle which makes the oak tree what it is (3); what does it inform? We might say the matter, i.e. the material which makes the tree, but the philosopher postulated the concept of a "purely indeterminate potential element which has no definite form of its own and no definite characteristics" - this is first matter (4). When a tree disappears, its substantial form disappears; its first matter does not disappear but exists under another form (5). Every material thing or substance is composed of a substantial form and first matter; neither is itself a thing or a substance, but the two together are the "component principles of a substance" (6).

The distinction between form and matter was a subdivision of the wider distinction between act and potentiality. "First matter is pure potentiality for successive actualisation by substantial forms each of which stands to its matter as act to potentiality"(7), i.e. matter is pure passive potency and

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1) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.86

2) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.86

3) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.86

4) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.86

5) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.87

6) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.87

7) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.93



requires form for its actual expression (1). This can be expressed in more simple language: water exists as water, but is capable, i.e. possesses the potentiality, of becoming steam. This distinction is found in every finite being; no finite being can exist without being actually something definite (2). Neither act nor potentiality can occur independently of one another: potentiality presupposes the act, and only through the actual can the potential exist, but if the potential disappear, there would be no movement and no activity (3).

The grammatical theory of the Modistae and their use of this metaphysical terminology in their technical vocabulary will be discussed in the next chapter. The succeeding chapters discuss in more detail Modistic descriptive technique and their descriptions and analyses of the partes orationis and their use at the higher, i.e. syntactic level; the final chapter is an assessment of the theories of the Modistae in terms of modern linguistic theories and descriptive procedures..

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1) M.H.Carré, Nominalists and Realists, p.72.

2) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.94.

3) M.H.Carré, Op.cit., p.71: cf. 3.11 where Modistic use of the substance-accident contrast is discussed with reference to the opposition of essential and accidental modes; the matter-form contrast is used at all three levels, i.e. metalanguage, etymologia and diasynthetica - this too is discussed in 3.11; the act-potentiality contrast is used specifically by the Modistae in their metalanguage to show the sequences of dictio, pars orationis, and constructible, and of modus and ratio significandi, and modus and ratio consignificandi, cf. 3.11.



### CHAPTER THREE

#### The Grammatical Theories and Techniques of the Modistae

3.0. Grammatical Theories of the Modistae.

3.01. Modistic descriptive technique.

3.1. Technical Terminology

3.11. Terminology of the Metalanguage.

3.12. Terminology of the Etymologia.

3.13. Terminology of the Diasynthetica.



### CHAPTER THREE

#### The Grammatical Theories and Techniques of the Modistae

##### 3.0. The grammatical theories of the Modistae.

It is a well-known truism to say that every theoretician of language is the creation of the associated disciplines of his intellectual background; this is manifestly true of most modern linguists, e.g. Ferdinand de Saussure who came to his theory of linguistics under the influence of the sociological theories of Durkheim (1). Despite their non-linguistic backgrounds, these linguists have all formulated theories of language which must be considered in and of themselves without interference from the disciplines which created their creators or which are akin to them by virtue of the similarity of their subject-matter.

The Modistae too were the spiritual children of their age and were clearly influenced by the philosophical theories on which they were nurtured (2). This is quite clear from the terminology used in their grammatical treatises (3); but the Modistae did more than retain the language of the disciplines closely associated in the Middle Ages to the study of grammar since they were, of course, more than grammarians and applied to the study of grammar not only the technical language of

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- 1) J.R.Firth, Personality and Language in Society, Papers in Linguistics 1934-1951, (1957), pp.177-189.
  - 2) These theories have been described in Chapter II.
  - 3) cf. 3.1, 3.11, 3.12, 3.13.



contemporary metaphysics and logic but also the theories of this metaphysics and logic.

In the earlier Middle Ages, grammar had tended to be almost synonymous with literary studies, i.e. like Priscian's grammar which sought to provide the key to the understanding of a literary text (1); with the rediscovery of Aristotle and the concomitant revival of learning (2), the study of literature was overshadowed by the study of logic and as a result of this change in emphasis, grammar came to be associated with the formulation of concepts of reality and their expression by language - the Modistae were, however, very insistent on the discreteness of logic and grammar (3); nevertheless, this association with logic and other non-linguistic disciplines had a profound effect on Modistic grammatical theories. Their conception of reality and of human reason lead them to maintain that grammar must be 'one' (4), and therefore Robert Kilwardby, one of the immediate predecessors of the Modistae, could argue that grammar can only be a science if it is one for all men (5)

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- 1) This is the implication in Paetow's important study, cf. L.J. Paetow, The Arts Course at Mediaeval Universities, The University of Illinois Studies, III.7 (1910).
  - 2) This has been outlined in Chapter II.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.135: sicut logica defendit animam nostram a falso in speculativis et a malo in practicis, sic grammatica defendit virtutem nostram interpretativam ab expressione conceptus mentis incongrua in omnibus scientiis.
  - 4) Roger Bacon: grammatica una et eadem est secundum substantiam in omnibus linguis, licet accidentaliter varietur. (Gram. Graec Oxford MS., p.278, quoted by Wallerand, Op.cit., p.(43) and by Robins, A. & M., p.77).
  - 5) Robert Kilwardby: cum scientia maneat eadem apud omnes, et subiectum eius idem manet, quare subiectum grammaticae debet manere idem in omnibus. Sed oratio constructa vel vox literata ordinabilis propter congruum non idem manet apud omnes; quare non erit subiectum grammaticae. (Quoted by Wallerand, p.(44)).



as a result of the intimacy between the reality of things and their conceptualisation by the mind, grammar becomes the study of the formulation of these concepts, their actual expression being accidental, and therefore incidental to Modistic grammatical theory. Furthermore, this theory of grammar had the effect of creating the belief that the universality of things as conceived and understood by the universality of human reason could be expressed in the universal language, Latin, which was thus raised to the status of a metalanguage. Minor matters such as the vernaculars had perhaps the effect of attesting differences in vocabulary, but these could be dismissed since they could not affect structure.

The result of this new approach to grammar was that the Modistae restated the formal definitions of Priscian of Latin grammar in terms suitable to the new spirit. This new descriptive procedure for grammar can be described as semantic, but it must be made quite clear that semantic in this context of situation should not be interpreted as notional or translational. For this reason, it would seem that Nehring's term of 'functional linguistics' (1) is much more suitable than logical grammar (2) or Sprachlogik (3) which in the past have been used by scholars to describe Modistic theory; the Modistae, in using 'significatio' and 'consignificatio', merely aimed at a statement of the

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- 1) A. Nehring, A Note on Functional Linguistics in the Middle Ages, *Traditio* IX (1953), 430-434.
  - 2) G. Wallerand, *Op.cit.*, p. (73).
  - 3) This is the term used by (inter alia) Roos and Grabmann.



functional nature of the formal categories which Priscian had described, the criteria for these categories being however stated in terms of the correlates of reality to which they correspond; this, apart from anything else, underlines the dubious value of 'signify' when applied to the indeclinable partes orationis (1) unless it is understood that 'signify' in such a context has no notional value but must be interpreted as 'functional'. Mediaeval grammarians, i.e. the Modistae, in context with their philosophical theories, now established the partes orationis as the correlates of reality; the metaphysician had established within the world of things two primary elements, that of permanence and that of becoming (habitus and fieri), the expression of which became the province of the grammarian. The partes orationis which express permanence and stability are the nomen and pronomen, while the verbum and participium express the concept of becoming; the metaphysical device of the contrast of matter and form is introduced (2) to distinguish the nomen and pronomen, and the verbum and participium - this is, however, more of a terminological distinction and it would be a mistake to identify matter with 'materia prima' and then apply this contrast of matter and form with its metaphysical implications and associations with substance directly to an analysis of the binary oppositions which serve to distinguish some of the partes orationis, viz. nomen/pronomen, verbum/participium; clearly the Modistae, influenced as they were

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1) cf. 5.12 et seq.

2) cf. 3.11.



by the metaphysical theory of reality, would naturally resort to a similar terminology to describe those words and more particularly those partes orationis which they had come to regard as the linguistic correlates of this reality.

It is almost a common-place, therefore, to say that philosophical theories had a tight hold on Modistic grammatical theories; the great controversy of nominalism and realism (1) had by their day lost much of its virulence and prominence but was, however, still vital enough to influence their philosophical outlook. The Modistae were not nominalists, since they might well otherwise have been induced to formulate their theories of grammar on factors other than functional signification. Nor were they extreme realists <sup>would</sup> which have been to imply that a word became merely an imitation of reality (2). The Modistae, in keeping with many of their contemporaries, took up a mid-way position and can perhaps be best described as moderate realists (3) since they do accept the existence of the universal in individuals which permitted them to set up word-classes for the individual words and yet they insist on the necessary function of the intelligence to be the necessary connection, albeit indirect, between the reality and its functional signification in a grammatical system. The word, in the Modistic scheme, is not just the imitation of a piece of reality but must pass through a "filter of intellectual apprehension" (4) which will impart to the word something of the

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1) This was discussed in Chapter II, p.40-44.

2) This is in effect denied by Thomas in his dismissal of 'substantia' as a criterion of the essence of the nomen, cf. 5.1111.

3) Discussed in Chapter II, p.42.

4) A. Nehring, Op. cit., p.433.



subjective ideas of the creator of the word; on the other hand, the word, which will however not be entirely a figment of the mind but must have some correlate in the world of things outside the mind (1), will therefore be defined in terms of the properties of the thing meant; this amounts to a subjective evaluation of the being and its properties which the intelligence has perceived and is now seeking to signify.

The danger is to classify the whole of a grammatical theory in terms of certain features employed in the description of these categories; it is quite true that the Modistae not only used technical terms which were borrowed from current philosophical language but also set up a grammatical theory which was based in theory on non-linguistic criteria (but in fact based on Donatus and Priscian), and then resorted to metaphysical values in order to define certain partes orationis which are, as a result, unequally classified in terms of the metaphysical values they do or do not possess (2). This does not mean that all their terms and all their grammatical features can be so described; indeed their definition of the nomen substantivum as signifying by means of the modus per se stantis is more in the way of being a functional definition rather than either a

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #6: modi significandi activi non sunt figmenta, oportet omnem modum significandi activum ab aliqua rei proprietate radicaliter oriri...cuilibet modo significandi activo correspondet aliqua proprietas rei seu modus essendi rei
  - 2) The difference between the indeclinable and the declinable partes can be described very simply that the declinable partes represent certain metaphysical qualities and the indeclinables, (which are therefore described in syntactic terms) do not.



metaphysical or a logical one (1).

The semantics of Modistic grammatical theory are discussed in more detail in the following sections of this chapter and in the following chapter. It is sufficient to state at this stage that Modistic grammatical theory rests on the study of words and the properties of these words as the 'signs of things' which are, however, capable of signification (2); the mind seizes upon the properties of the thing, there being a mode of understanding for each property to be understood (3). The mind is not satisfied with the mere understanding of the thing but seeks to give it linguistic formulation by means of the mode of signifying - this meaning is not a possession of the thing itself but is bestowed on it by the mind (4) and the process therefore continues until the word has the ability not only to signify, i.e. to denote, but also to signify functionally i.e. syntactically, by means of the *modus consignificandi* (5).

There is complete interdependence in such a theory between the structure of reality and the operations of the mind; but the active mode of signifying, such as the Modistae used it, never goes beyond the conceptual (which will to some extent at least account for the total exclusion of phonic criteria in their grammatical theory), so that the *partes orationis* become

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- 1) cf. 5.1111.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #19: *grammatica est de signis rerum*.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: *modus intelligendi activus est modus quo intellectus comprehendit modum essendi seu proprietatem ipsius rei*.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p.135: *grammatica est de modis significandi qui sunt operati ab anima*.
  - 5) cf. 3.11.



the formulation of these concepts and are validated by their modes of signifying the things and the properties of the things that the mind has perceived (1). Grammar, therefore, becomes the study of these formulations of a mental concept, but this must not be confused with the function of logic which is to distinguish right from wrong (2).

The grammarian, whatever his theoretical standpoint may be, studies the same data as other grammarians with different theoretical backgrounds; the tests of his theory will obviously not be his data which must, by definition, always be the same, but his interpretation of his data; Hjelmslev has postulated (3) three requirements for the examination of a theory, i.e. self-consistency, exhaustiveness and simplicity.

If we apply these requirements to Modistic theory, we find a remarkable degree of consistency in their grammatical theories, but we cannot claim a similar degree of exhaustiveness of their account, since, as we shall see (4), so many of their criteria were taken from extra-linguistic matters, e.g. the syllogism of formal logic had the effect of dismissing the subordinate clause from the type of construction which the Modistic grammarian would include in his inventory (5). The Modistae retained practically the whole of the Priscianic

- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: modi significandi activi sunt quidam conceptus ipsius intellectus; nunc conceptus intellectus manent in intellectu et sunt in eo et non transeunt extra.
- 2) cf. p. 50, fn.3: 145-6.
- 3) L. Hjelmslev, Prolegomena to a Theory of Language (1953), p.9-11.
- 4) cf. p.480.
- 5) Thomas does mention once, cf. 5.233, the use of a subordinating conjunction when discussing the criteria for a complete construction, so that this cannot be dismissed altogether.



grammatical system but omitted or restated those features which did not fit into their 'a priori' grammatical system, e.g. they omitted altogether the subordinating conjunction from their inventory of the conjunctions. The principle of simplicity can also be said to apply to the grammatical theory of the Modistae, since the number of their premisses and the terms involved are fairly few, so that the inventory of the operations necessary to their grammatical procedure is relatively simple and economical.

If, on the other hand, we accept Wallerand's definition (1) of the grammarian-philosopher, i.e. "étudier les formes de pensée correspondant aux choses et à leurs propriétés, déduire de ces formes de pensée, afin de les exprimer, les parties du discours et les justifier par elles jusque dans leurs détails, en un mot, faire correspondre parfaitement les formes logiques et les formes grammaticales, tel est le travail du grammairien philosophe" (2), then we can say that the grammatico-metaphysical schemes of the Modistae were eminently suitable, though the modern grammarian cannot begin to contemplate such a method of grammatical description as an efficient frame-work on which to build his analysis of linguistic structure.

### 3.01. Modistic descriptive technique

There is a considerable degree of agreement among the

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1) G. Wallerand, Op. cit., p.(71).

2) 'les formes logiques' must be understood as traditional logical forms; this must not, in any sense, be understood in terms of modern formal logic.



Modistae on their grammatical doctrine, but there tends to be more divergence in their actual presentation of this doctrine. It would, however, be a mistake to exaggerate the degree of divergence among them (1), because, as we shall see (2), it is possible to equate the definitions of the various categories (3) used by the Modistae and the different elements used in the creation and description of a *pars orationis* (4).

This section aims at a very summary account of Modistic descriptive technique; the need for this will soon be apparent, since the concluding sections of this chapter treat the extensive technical vocabulary used by the Modistae. Their descriptive technique will, however, be discussed in much greater detail in Chapters IV and V (5).

The broad line of their procedure was a tri-partite statement, made progressively but in unequal divisions, of a dualist view of grammar; the first part consists of a description of their metalanguage (6) which is followed by their descriptions of the *partes orationis* (called the 'Etymologia' (7) by Thomas of Erfurt) and then of the syntax of these *partes orationis* (called the 'Diasynthetica' (8) by

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1) cf. Appendix A., p.602-10.

2) cf. Chapter IV.

3) cf. 4.2.

4) cf. 4.1.

5) Chapter V provides illustrations of their metalanguage as used in actual descriptive process.

6) This is my term for a section which is variously called by the Modistae, cf. 4.0.

7) cf. 5.1.

8) cf. 5.2.



Thomas of Erfurt).

The preamble or the Metalanguage is used not only to describe their technical language, but also, and more particularly the elements and categories (1) required in a descriptive process beginning with the speech act (2) and culminating in the word; in reality this preamble becomes an introduction to the type of analysis required for the description of any pars orationis, from its conception to its inception, and consists of two inter-related procedures, viz. vox to pars orationis and modus essendi to modus significandi (3).

The preamble, therefore, explains the development from the sound to the word, from the thought to the expression and from the thing to be signified to the thing as it is signified; the sound - it must be understood that the Modistae excluded phonetics altogether from grammatical theory (4) - will also be a sign and can therefore designate something which has been understood by the mind. The sign acquires the potentiality of signifying (ratio significandi) (5) as a result of which the sign (signum) becomes a dictio (6). The process does not cease at this stage; the dictio acquires from the mind the mode of signifying (modus significandi) which turns it into a pars orationis which is a grammatical unit with the potentiality of consignifying (ratio consignificandi), i.e. of signifying

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1) cf. 5.1.

2) Vox is used here in the sense of 'expression'; it must not be associated with the 'voice' or 'phoneme' of modern linguistics.

3) cf. 3.12 and 4.21 and 4.24 for the use of these terms.

4) Frequent reference will be made to this fact, cf. 4.11, etc.

5) cf. 3.11 and 3.12 for the use of this term.

6) cf. 4.13.



syntactically (1) - the Modistic way of saying that it is usable syntactically, and it acquires thereby its mode of consignification (*modus consignificandi*) which is its syntactic mode of signifying (2). Similarly, every thing - and the Modistae do not restrict this term 'thing' (*res*) to material objects - has a mode of being (*modus essendi*) which can be conceived by the mind by means of the mode of understanding (*modus intelligendi*) and once this stage has been reached, it is now capable of being signified by means of the mode of signifying (*modus significandi*). A *pars orationis* is, therefore, a creation of i) the thing (*res*), ii) the understanding of the thing (*modus intelligendi*), iii) the expression of the thing (*vox*), and iv) the signifying of the thing (*modus significandi*) (3).

The real tools in Modistic description of the *partes orationis* are the modes of signifying divided into essential and accidental (4). The essential mode was divided, by Siger (5), into general and specific, the general constituting an *'archipars'* in conjunction with the general essential modes of other *partes orationis* (6), but together with the specific mode it constitutes the essence of the *pars* in question (7).

Thomas divides his essential mode into *modus generalissimus* (8). and into the *modus subalternus* and *modus specialissimus*; the

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1) cf. 3.11

2) All these terms are discussed towards the end of 3.11, pp.78-82.

3) cf. the section 'Categories' (4.2 et seq.) for these terms.

4) cf. 4.244 and 4.245.

5) cf. pp. 181-2.

6) cf. p. 141.

7) cf. p. 183-4.

8) cf. p. 182.



modus generalissimus is, in effect, the same in doctrine as Siger's essential mode, but aims at distinguishing the partes orationis which may be related in terms of their essence, e.g. the nomen and pronoun, the verb and the participle, and does so by means of the matter-form contrast (1). Siger in fact starts one stage 'prior' to Thomas's modus generalissimus by using the modus generalis to indicate those partes orationis which share the same essence. He is aiming quite clearly at a procedure which would describe the partes orationis economically i.e. by first stating the essential features that some of them share, i.e. by means of the modus generalis, before giving a description of each pars orationis in terms which serve to distinguish it from the other partes orationis, i.e. by means of the modus specificus. Siger thus produces a grammatical statement which is tantamount almost to a system of three word-classes (2) which can be defined by the modus entis, modus esse, and the modus disponentis, and these word-classes are divided, by means of the modus specificus, into the component partes

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- 1) cf. 3.11 where the use of this contrast is discussed in much greater detail: cf. also the list of grammatical oppositions which the Modistae describe by means of the matter-form contrast, p. 71-7.
  - 2) Siger is, of course, working entirely with metaphysical and metalinguistic material; his theories would be unacceptable to modern linguists because of their terms of reference, not *perhaps so much because of their presentation; arguments have been made in favour of certain universal features which are* also noticeable in Siger's description of the general modes of the partes orationis, cf. R. H. Robins, *Noun and Verb in Universal Grammar*. *Language* (1952), 28. 289-298. Siger's procedure represents a radical departure from the pattern of his predecessors, and should be contrasted with Thomas's more orthodox presentation of the partes orationis by means of the partes orationis of Latin in the order that they had been presented by his classical models.



orationis. The term 'archipars' has been used on numerous occasions to describe this feature, but it has been discussed in detail here in order to suggest that Siger's description, at least of the essential modes, is more modern and also 'simpler' (1) than Thomas's. Thomas completes his essential mode by means of subaltern modes and modi specialissimi (2), which are in fact detailed descriptions and inventories of the types of word which make up this pars orationis. Both Siger and Thomas then describe each pars orationis in terms of its accidental modes which represent variations of the essence of the pars in question: it can be said that these accidental modes, in the Modistic scheme, correspond to a large extent to the traditional 'accident' in grammar, but it would be quite mistaken to equate these terms entirely in view of the philosophical term 'accidentia' (3) which featured prominently in mediaeval metaphysics. The difference between the Modistae and their predecessors on the matter of accident and accidental modes has already been suggested, (4), and it can also be easily seen (5) in their different conceptions of certain features, e.g. Thomas considers 'potestas' in the conjunction (6) to be an essential mode whereas Donatus and Priscian had both described it as an accident, and also by the

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1) In the Hjelmslevian sense, cf. 3.0. p. 56-7.

2) cf. p. 185-7.

3) cf. 3.11.

4) cf. p. 70-1.

5) cf. the diagram in Appendix A, p. 610, which shows the different treatments of various accidents or accidental modes.

6) cf. 5.1221.



introduction of certain accidental modes, e.g. Thomas's use of compositio (1) as an accidental mode of the verb, since this is entirely absent from Donatus and Priscian (2).

The Modistae, once the partes orationis have been described, proceed to a description of the syntax of these partes orationis; this is done in three stages, i.e.

i) constructio (3), the combination of the constructibles or members of the construction, ii) congruitas (4), the proper combination of these constructibles, and iii) perfectio (5) which is the proper expression of a complete construction, by means of which a compound concept of the mind can be expressed and understood.

The Modistae derived their grammatical data from Donatus and Priscian and from Peter Helias's commentaries on Priscian (6): the absence of exemplification in Thomas's and Siger's treatises can in most instances be explained by the fact that Siger and Thomas taught students who would already be familiar with Donatus and Priscian and who would refer to Donatus and Priscian for examples to illustrate the theories of the Modistae.

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1) cf. 3.11.

2) cf. p.345.

3) cf. 3.13 and 5.24.

4) cf. 3.13 and 5.232.

5) cf. 5.233.

6) Siger de Courtrai, p.102: ideo dicit Priscianus, V <sup>ai</sup> ~~M~~oris, capitulo de figura dictionis: in quantitate comprehenditur, et Commentator quod figura est qualitas quantitatis dictionis. Peter Helias is often called Commentator in relation to Priscian; this quotation is used here as a typical example of their occurrence together in Siger's text.



Modistic grammatical procedure is largely a semanticisation of the more formal categories of Priscian and a restatement of these formal categories by means of the various modes of signifying; the diagram in Appendix A (1) shows at a glance that both Siger and Thomas turned most of the accidents described by Donatus and Priscian into accidental modes, except that any accident of Donatus's which is in fact a means of stating in more detail those words or types of words which constitute the pars in question, Thomas includes as a subaltern essential mode, e.g. *qualitas* in the nomen (2), which Donatus describes as an accident of the nomen, is described by Thomas in the form of the subaltern modes <sup>and</sup> ~~of~~ the *modi specialissimi* of the nomen. This may well be a refinement introduced by Thomas, since he comes after Siger (3) who included this feature, i.e. *qualitas*, as an accidental mode of the nomen (4); if more works of the Modistae were available in print, it would be interesting to note the improvements made by the later Modistae to the work of their immediate predecessors (5) - Roos has pointed out (6) a number of refinements, albeit

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- 1) cf. p.610. The blanks in the different columns indicate that this particular feature is not found in the pars in question in a particular grammarian's work, e.g. Thomas does not describe 'gradus' as an accidental mode of the nomen.
  - 2) cf. 5.1111, p.228-29.
  - 3) cf. Chapter I, p.22-29, also p.686 for a tentative chronology of the Modistae.
  - 4) cf. 5.1111, p.227.
  - 5) The Modistae as a group constitute the second generation of grammarians who benefited from the rediscovery of Aristotle to restate much of traditional grammatical theory, and can be considered the successors of people like Peter Helias, Petrus Hispanus, Robert Kilwardby, etc.; the Modistae often improve and refine the work of their pioneer predecessors, rather like linguists of today who follow on from scholars like de Saussure, Trubetzkoy, Jones, Bloomfield and Firth, etc. However, even in the second generation of the Modistae there appears to have been two 'age-groups', so that we find Thomas making refinements which are absent from Siger.
  - 6) H. Roos, *Op.cit.*, p.139-141.



terminological ones, absent from Martin of Dacia, one of the earliest of the Modistae, but which are to be found in the later Modistae, e.g. the terms 'Etymologia' and 'Diasynthetica' are not found in Martin (nor in Siger for that matter) but are found in Thomas.

We find, then, that Siger follows Priscian and Donatus very closely in the organisation of his material, though his exposition, by virtue of his different theoretical approach, is often quite different: Thomas too follows them closely, but does however introduce features not found in his predecessors (1) and in addition assigns material taken from Donatus to a different part of his exposition (2).

### 3.1. Technical Terminology

The technical vocabulary used by the Modistae in their grammatical descriptions has been described as formidable (3): it is indeed, not only in its complexity and occasional obscurity, but there is in addition the danger of confusion with certain terms familiar by other use to the modern or traditional linguist, e.g. demonstratio which is used by Thomas of Erfurt (4) to include 'presence' (praesentia) as an aspect of the feature of 'substance' in the pronoun - this is clearly

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- 1) e.g. compositio in the verb and persona in the nomen: he also uses 'significatio' in the verb quite differently from his predecessors including Siger, cf. 5.1122, p.344.
  - 2) e.g. qualitas in the nomen and pronoun, significatio in the adverb and interjection, casus in the preposition and potestas in the conjunction, all of which were accidents in Donatus's account but become subaltern modes in Thomas's account, except significatio in the interjection which becomes the modi specialissimi, since Thomas does not include a subaltern mode for this particular pars orationis.
  - 3) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.80.
  - 4) cf. 5.1141, p.431-32.



quite different from the usual grammatical conception of demonstration. This complicated grammatical terminology becomes more understandable, however, when we realise that the Modistae were not 'pure' grammarians - (the word 'pure' is used here in the sense that scholars of linguistics such as Bloomfield in America or Hjelmslev in Denmark can be termed 'pure' in that they devote their scholarly energies to the study of linguistics and have sought to create a technical vocabulary which is free from association with other disciplines) - for the Modistae were also logicians and philosophers (1) which will perhaps account, at least to a certain extent, for the intricacy and wealth of this grammatical terminology.

Certain items in Modistic terminology occur with great frequency, whereas others are found either much less frequently or in much more easily definable contexts; some terms have been included for discussion in this chapter, not because there is any intrinsic problem in their definition, but because they are used by the Modistae in more than one sense, e.g. *genus* in the *nomen* (2) and *verb*, *modus* in the *verb* and as a general descriptive term for any mode of signifying, and *forma* which is used as a general term in contrast to *materia* and also by

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- 1) Wallerand's edition of Siger de Courtrai's work contains his "Ars Priorum", and his "Fallaciae".
  - 2) *Nomen* is used throughout to refer to both substantive and adjective, since *noun* is usually taken to refer to substantive only: the terms *substantivum* and *adjectivum* are occasionally used to refer obviously to substantive and adjective.



Thomas as an accidental mode of the verb (1), equivalent to 'species' to describe this feature in the verb, - while 'species' is also used in Modistic non-technical language to indicate the different types of any word or pars orationis etc. It is inevitable that certain words acquire a technical value in certain contexts which they do not possess elsewhere; this only accentuates the inadequacy of language, particularly when talking about language (2). One of the aims of this section however will be to separate the technical and non-technical usage of many of these terms, since the Modistae too must surely have been aware of such a difference (3). Apart from anything else, the examination and interpretation of these terms becomes a valuable exercise in the application of Professor J. R. Firth's theory of meaning by collocation and context of situation (4) to the

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- 1) cf. 3.11 for a discussion of the term *modus accidentalis* in contrast to 'accidentia', and also to 4.245 for a lengthier exposition of the use of this category.
  - 2) J.R. Firth, *The Semantics of Linguistic Science*, Papers in Linguistics, p.140: "Let it be borne in mind that language is often not very apt when used by itself, even in technical linguistic studies...The technical language for the systematic statement of the facts of language cannot, any more than for mathematics, be the language of every day common sense."
  - 3) F.C. Copleston, Aquinas, p.66: "It is also a mistake to assume that the mediaevals, because they lived centuries ago, must all have been linguistically naive. They were aware, for example, that the same word may have different senses in common usage, that the meaning of a word when used as a technical term in philosophy may not be exactly the same as the meaning or meanings which it bears in non-philosophical language, and that the meaning of a word in its philosophical use needs to be precisely stated."
  - 4) The terms are discussed by Firth in his "Modes of Meaning", "The Technique of Semantics", "General Linguistics and Descriptive Grammar" in Papers in Linguistics 1934-1951, and also in his "A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory, 1930-1955" in Studies in Linguistic Analysis (Special volume of the Philological Society), 1957.



understanding and definition of such terms.

The purpose, therefore, of this portion of this chapter is to discuss those terminological elements which have a wide application and an understanding of which is essential to an appreciation of the grammatical elements or processes involved and discussed in Chapter IV, and of the description of the partes orationis in Chapter V; those terms which have a narrower application will be discussed under their appropriate sections in the consideration of our corpus, e.g. demonstratio is a term used only with reference to the pronoun and will therefore be discussed along with the analysis of the pronoun (1). The presentation of this technical vocabulary is divided into three parts; the first contains those terms which refer more to the metalanguage of the Modistae, the second refers to those terms which are found in the analyses of the different partes orationis - certain of the accidental modes (2) are included since they are quite different from the usual vocabulary of description of modern grammarians, e.g. species, figura, compositio, etc., whereas others e.g. casus, numerus, coniugatio, tempus, persona (3), are used approximately as any grammarian today would use them, and require no special explanation; the third part contains technical terms found in Modistic syntactic theory, and which, apart from certain terms incorporated from contemporary philosophical and metaphysical

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1) cf. 5.1141.

2) cf. 4.245.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, and Martin of Dacia do actually use 'persona' as an accidental mode of the nomen, as well as an accidental mode of the verb: this requires a little more comment, cf. 5.1112.



theory, e.g. actus, potentia, represent the greatest innovation and divergence from traditional grammatical vocabulary.

### 3.11 Terminology of the Metalanguage

The linguist who studies the Modistae is faced with the problem of a technical terminology which is intrinsically difficult, since the Modistae were typical of the mediaeval schoolmen, i.e. in the intricacy of their terminology and in the subtlety of their argument, but the linguist - who may not, moreover, be familiar with mediaeval philosophical metalanguage - has also to cope with a technical grammatical vocabulary which in many cases has been borrowed from philosophy and, to complicate matters further, has retained a marked undertone from its philosophical or logical origin.

The theory of hylomorphism and its adaptation by the Modistae has already been referred to (1), and the terms associated with it, i.e. substantia, materia, forma and accidentia, were used by the Modistae in their general descriptive processes as the terms for describing a number of binary oppositions, especially between the four declinable partes orationis (2) and also between members of the same partes orationis (3). The Modistae do not, however, make extensive use of substantia or accidentia as technical terms; Siger uses substantia, in a more every-day sense, as one of the features

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1) cf. Chapter II.

2) cf. the essential modes of the nomen, 5.111, verb, 5.1121, participle 5.1131, and pronoun 5.1141.

3) Siger de Courtrai, p.102: adiectiva dependent in esse a suis substantivis sicut accidentia a substantiis.



which the general essential modes of the nomen and pronoun signify (1), though Thomas, in his description of the nomen (and by implication of the pronoun) (2), deliberately substitutes 'modus entis' for substantia as one of the criteria for the general mode, in view of the problem which the use of the term 'substantia' would create in the description of items such as 'negatio', 'privatio' and 'figmentum' (3).

It is, however, difficult to draw any absolute conclusion from the way that both Siger and Thomas use these terms. Siger, as has just been pointed out, uses substantia as a feature of the nomen and pronoun, and such usage does not always seem to carry with it any metaphysical implications: on the other hand, Siger does use on two occasions (4) the analogy of substantia-accidentia as a means of suggesting the difference between the substantive and adjective, and between the nomen and verb. The Modistae use 'accidentia' considerably less frequently than their predecessors, since they have 'created', to fit their general descriptive scheme, the term 'modus accidentalis' (5) to describe most of the features traditionally considered 'accidents', and it is often difficult to decide whether ~~the~~

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1) cf. 5.111 and 5.1141

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #25: intelligere per significare substantiam modum substantiae, qui est modus entis sumptus a proprietate rei, quae est proprietas habitus et permanentis.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #26: licet privationes et negationes non sint entia positiva extra animam posita: sunt tamen entia positiva secundum animam. This suggests considerable alertness on the part of Thomas in that, having appreciated the inadequacy of the term 'substantia' as the criterion for the nomen, he is at least better able to justify on philosophical grounds his new term 'ens'.

4) Siger de Courtrai, p.140: nomen dignius est verbo quia substantia dignior est accidente.

5) cf. 4.245, where the use of modus accidentalis in contrast to accidentia is discussed.



the use<sup>15</sup> in the conventional grammatical or the contemporary metaphysical sense. It seems, however, reasonable to suggest that in view of their creation of the term 'modus accidentalis', the term 'accidentia', when used, is to be considered more as a counterpart to 'substantia' rather than in the more formal (1) grammatical sense (2). It is difficult and rash, however, to assume that this will always be so since Siger uses substantia and qualitas as in his description of the nomen (3) and negatively so in the pronoun, i.e. the pronoun signifies substance but without quality (4), and in this sense it might be argued that Siger is using substantia and qualitas as associated terms for materia and forma in his analysis of the nomen and pronomen and this is particularly true of the pronoun (5), since, as we shall see, one great difference between the nomen and pronoun is the absence of form in the pronoun, so that the pronoun has the similar function in grammar to that of matter in substance, that of being informable, i.e. capable of bearing a qualification (6).

The Modistae, especially Thomas, made deliberate and extensive use of the materia-forma contrast to produce a number

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- 1) formal is here used in the modern grammatical sense of the term.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #131: *modus, ut est accidens verbi....* Siger de Courtrai, p.123: *a nomine, scilicet, substantiam et per consequens accidentia eius, scilicet, genus et casum.*
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.131: *modus significandi essentialis est qui ingreditur essentiam partis, sicut substantia et qualitas in nomine.*
  - 4) cf. 5.114.
  - 5) Siger de Courtrai, p.125: *in pronomine est substantia per se et quod pronomen substantiam solum non etiam qualitatem significat, ita quod consimili modo imaginandum in pronomine sicut materia prima.*
  - 6) cf. 5.1141.



of binary oppositions, especially between the four declinable partes, but also at various other levels (1). A very important factor which should always be borne in mind is that in addition to any philosophical implications, the opposition of materia-forma is a descriptive device used by the Modistae in grammatical description as a means of stating a series of oppositions, and Thomas therefore uses it in his metalanguage, in his descriptions of the declinable partes orationis, and in his syntax; Siger uses the opposition too, but less overtly, though he clearly has it in mind in many of his examples without stating so specifically.

Thomas uses matter (materia) as a means of stating a feature which the pars shares in common with other partes (2), while form (forma) is used to indicate the quality which distinguishes it, i.e. which marks it off from other partes (3), e.g. the nomen and pronoun have the same matter, i.e. modus entis, but the nomen, by reason of its form, is capable of designating distinctly (4) which the pronoun cannot, since it possesses no form (5). A similar use of this contrast is made to distinguish the verb and the participle, except that in the case of the participle (in contrast to the pronoun) it does possess a form of its own, and the two, i.e. verb and participle,

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- 1) cf. 5.22 where some of these oppositions are listed.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #23: modus entis habet rationem materiae, quae est facere convenire.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #23: modus determinatae apprehensionis habet rationem formae, quae facit nomen ab aliis partibus orationis differre.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: qualitatis seu formae est distinguere. Thomas of Erfurt, #24: a proprietate formae et qualitatis, quae est proprietas de terminantis, quoniam forma determinat et distinguit.
  - 5) G.Wallerand, *Op.cit.*, p.(50): la fonction du pronom en grammaire est celle de la matière première dans les substances.



are distinguished by means of a formal element ~~which indeed it must do by definition~~ (1). It seems reasonable to maintain that Siger also makes use of the opposition (without explicitly saying so) in the indeclinable partes, in that they all have the same matter, i.e. the modus disponentis (2), but a different forma which distinguishes them from each other, i.e. the specific mode of each of the indeclinable partes (3). Thomas does not use matter-form to describe and distinguish the indeclinables but resorts to more strictly syntactic criteria (4): Siger too, although he does set up by implication the contrast, indeed as a result of his method of presentation, uses syntactic criteria to describe the indeclinables. Mention at this length is made, partly to illustrate Siger's tremendous consistency in his method of presentation (5), but more particularly to suggest that, if we do accept the materia-forma contrast as a device used in Siger's description of the indeclinables (6), it reinforces the argument that grammatical as well as philosophical reasons governed the retention of these technical terms; it is quite possible to argue that there are philosophical grounds for the use of the materia-forma opposition in the declinable partes, but it requires a real effort of the imagination to conceive of

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- 1) Distantia in the verb and indistantia in the participle represent the form by means of which they are discrete.
  - 2) cf. 5.12.
  - 3) cf. 5.121, 5.122, 5.123 and 5.124.
  - 4) cf. p.447-49.
  - 5) These details are introduced in support of the argument that the Modistae are very consistent in the presentation of their grammatical description.
  - 6) In the declinable partes, Siger uses the general and specific modes as the matter-form contrast: similarly, therefore, the general and specific modes in the indeclinables represent the same grammatical opposition.



the metaphysics of substance playing a part in the definitions of the indeclinable partes.

Thomas makes extensive use of matter and form in his preamble, and this applies to both the elements and categories, which, as we shall see (1), form his metalanguage. A dictio and pars orationis have one feature in common, i.e. vox (2) which constitutes their matter, - a dictio is a signum which possesses the ability (3), the potentiality to signify (ratio significandi) (4), while the pars is distinct from the dictio (5) since it possesses the ability to consignify (ratio consignificandi) (6), and the formal differences here are achieved by means of the two 'rationes'.

The categories used in the structure of a pars orationis are the modus essendi, modus intelligendi and the modus significandi, and the modus intelligendi and significandi can be divided into active and passive (7); the contrast of matter and form is used by Thomas to distinguish them (8), though not perhaps in quite so simple or obvious a matter as in the case

1) cf. Chapter IV.

2) cf. 4.11.

3) Michel de Marbais: dictio unde dictio est, includit in se vocem tanquam sibi materiam et rationem significandi tanquam sibi formam (Quoted by Thurot, p.156).

4) cf. p.110-11.

5) cf. 4.13.

6) cf. p.111-13.

7) cf. 4.24 and 4.22.

8) Thomas of Erfurt, #14: modus intelligendi activus et modus intelligendi passivus differunt materialiter, et conveniunt formaliter...eadem est ratio intelligendi, per quam intellectus proprietatem rei intelligit active, et per quam rei proprietas intelligitur passive.



of dictio and pars orationis. There is distinction of form between the three levels of being, understanding and signifying, but similarity of matter between the passive modes (1); at the levels of understanding and signifying, there is in both cases a difference of matter and a similarity of form between the active and the passive (2). The following diagram shows the matter and form of the three levels of the metalanguage.

	materialiter	formaliter
modus essendi	proprietas <u>rei</u>	ratio essentiae
modus intelligendi activus	proprietas <u>intellectus</u>	ratio intelligendi
modus intelligendi passivus	proprietas <u>rei</u>	ratio intelligendi
modus significandi activus	proprietas <u>vocis</u>	ratio significandi
modus significandi passivus	proprietas <u>rei</u>	ratio significandi

This suggests the grammatical application of the close relationship between matter and form and another mediaeval metaphysical distinction, i.e. act and potentiality, which, however, the Modistae

- 1) cf. Thomas of Erfurt, #12-13: modi essendi, et modi intelligendi passivi, et modi significandi, sunt idem materialiter et realiter, sed differunt formaliter...modus essendi, et modus intelligendi activus, et modus significandi activus differunt formaliter et materialiter.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #15: modus significandi activus et passivus differunt materialiter et sunt idem formaliter; quia modus significandi passivus dicit proprietatem rei sub ratione consignificandi passiva; sed modus significandi activus dicit proprietatem vocis, quae est ratio consignificandi activa; sed eadem est ratio, per quam vox est significans active, et per quam proprietas rei significatur passive.



do not use to any great extent in their grammatical writings; the form can be said to actualise the matter (1).

The relationships of matter and form, and act and potentiality explain another problematical item of Modistic metalanguage. A dictio possesses a mode of designating (modus signandi) as its matter and an ability or potentiality to signify (ratio significandi) as its form which actualises its matter to become a pars orationis (2); in turn a pars orationis has as its matter an active mode of signifying (modus significandi activus) which is actualised by its form (ratio consignificandi) i.e. its ability to consignify (3) to become a mode of consignification (modus consignificandi) which represents its function at the syntactic level.

This matter and form distinction is taken by Thomas to the syntactic level, where he maintains that the relationship and combination of the dependent and terminant constructibles (4) can be compared to the relationship of matter and form, and

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- 1) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.93: "first matter, considered in abstraction, is pure potentiality for successive actualisation by substantial forms, each of which stands to its matter as act to potentiality, actualising the matter's potentiality".
  - 2) cf. 4.14.
  - 3) cf. p.111-13.
  - 4) cf. 5.24 et seq.



act and potentiality (1); matter and form combine to form a whole, and similarly dependent and terminant constructibles combine to form a construction (2). This is reinforced by Thomas when discussing the principles of construing (3), i.e. that the principium materiale refers to the constructibles, the matter of the construction, which are capable of being actualised by the form, i.e. by the principium formale, into a construction (4).

Both Thomas and Siger use the term qualitas in the essential mode of the nomen almost as an equivalent to 'forma' (5); its use here is clearly different from 'qualitas' which Siger describes as an accidental mode of the nomen. Thomas, although he too, like Siger, takes qualitas from Donatus, makes of it however the subaltern modes of the nomen to create the proper names, substantives and adjectives (6). Thomas also makes of qualitas an accidental mode of the verb: this too he takes from Donatus (7), and divides it into mood (modus) and forma (which represents in this instance (8) a similar feature in the verb to 'species' in the nomen (9), indeed, Siger calls it 'species' in the verb also). There are other uses of qualitas,

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: sicut ex materia et forma, quorum unum est in actu, alterum vero in potentia, fit per se compositum in natura; sic ex ratione dependendi et terminandi fit per se constructio in sermone.

2) cf. fn. 3, p. 549.

3) cf. 5.22

4) cf. 5.222

5) cf. fn. 1, p. 223.

6) cf. 5.111

7) cf. 5.1121

8) Thomas of Erfurt, #134: forma, quae est accidens verbi, idem est, quod species in nomine, et ab eadem proprietate sumpta, scilicet a modo essendi primarie vel secundarie.

9) cf. 5.1112.



i.e. as a type of adjective (1) and adverb (2): *qualitas* is also used to describe the relationship between mood and *compositio* (3), and genus and *significatio* (4), but these different uses can be clearly observed by their collocations within different contexts of grammatical description.

There are, in addition, two terms requiring mention here, which are encountered in Modistic metalanguage, i.e. ratio and consignificatio; they have no semantic relationship but in association they suggest explanations of other terms included in this chapter. Ratio can be found collocated with a number of technical terms, and there seem to be three basic types of these collocations; in addition, ratio occurs very frequently in various other collocations and situations which suggest that it is a word rather than a technical term used to express the means of doing or achieving something (5), and in such instances does not seem to possess any particular terminological value.

In collocation with terms of the metalanguage, e.g. *intelligendi*, *significandi*, *consignificandi*, ratio suggests the capability of doing something, and, as was suggested, seems to represent 'potentia' while 'modus' becomes the actuality

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1) cf. 5.1111.

2) cf. 5.1211.

3) cf. 5.1122.

4) cf. 5.1122.

5) Siger de Courtrai, p.130: *si ista oratio est congrua: "amo est verbum", aut hoc est ratione significati, aut ratione modi significandi, aut ratione vocis. (my italics).*



(actus) (1), so that the dictio possesses the mode of designating and the potentiality of signifying (2), and the pars orationis possesses the mode of signifying and the potentiality of consignifying (3).

The second collocation occurs with principium, terminus, suppositum and appositum (4), and in such instances ratio implies potential syntactic function; in discussing the cases of the nomen (5) Thomas clearly suggests that word-order is a relevant factor, and ascribes a different value, in some instances to a case-form in terms of its relevant position (6) in the construction (7). Similarly an equally relevant position is ascribed to the suppositum or appositum, and by this means Thomas is able to produce a very formal analysis (8), despite its semantic description (9), of a sentence such as "ens est" (10), which otherwise requires a lengthy explanation if we are to be satisfied with a conventional Modistic explanation of modus

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: sicut ex materia et forma, quorum unum est in actu, alterum vero in potentia, fit per se compositum in natura; sic ex ratione dependendi et terminandi fit per se constructio in sermone. This is quoted as an instance of Modistic use of 'actus' and 'potentia'.
  - 2) cf. 4.13.
  - 3) cf. 4.14.
  - 4) cf. p.92.
  - 5) cf. 5.1112.
  - 6) cf. 5.1112.
  - 7) Thomas of Erfurt, #88: iste genitivus Socratis significat rem in ratione principii, respectu huius verbi interest.
  - 8) This is the modern use of the term.
  - 9) On many occasions the Modistae present us with a 'formal' explanation despite their attempts to hide it under their semanticisation.
  - 10) Thomas of Erfurt, #116: in ista propositione significatum verbi non differat essentialiter et secundum rem a significato suppositi, differt tamen ab eo secundum rationem, et hoc sufficit ad distantiam et diversitatem verbi a supposito, quae sunt entia secundum rationem.



entis and modus esse as the means of differentiating between 'ens' and 'est' in this sentence (1): Thomas states, in effect, that this is not done by means of the meaning of the suppositum but by means of the relevant position of the suppositum (ratio suppositi) (2).

The third collocation of 'ratio' is used by Thomas on two occasions with materia and forma in discussing the general modes of the nomen and verbum (3); it seems almost as if Thomas is describing the two parts of each mode by analogy with matter and form, i.e. that the modus entis corresponds to matter and determinata apprehensio to form, etc. rather than that they actually represent matter and form (4).

Reference has been made to the collocation of 'ratio consignificandi', and once more it would seem relevant to contrast the occurrence of 'consignificare' in such a collocation with its use in other contexts (5). Scholars, discussing this feature (6) have used the words 'dolor' and 'doleo', and also 'donum' and 'datum' to illustrate the significance of the term 'consignificare', but these examples do not occur in either Thomas or Siger. Both use the term 'consignificare', and it would appear that they both use it alike and with two widely different implications. The first is found in collocation with 'modus' or 'ratio' and

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1) Thomas even tries the matter-form contrast to explain the difference between 'ens' and 'est' in "ens est".

2) cf. fn. 1, p. 330.

3) cf. fn. 1, p. 328.

4) This is mentioned to support the argument that matter and form were as much grammatical devices as metaphysical distinctions in the hands of the Modistae.

5) cf. p. 121-2.

6) Ch. Thurot, Op.cit., p. 155-6.  
H. Roos, Op.cit., p. 143-144.



in such instances suggests syntactic meaning. A word (dictio) has the potential capability of signifying (ratio significandi) which is actualised by means of the 'vox significativa' (1) to become a pars orationis which is such by means of the active mode of signifying (2); a pars orationis is functionally useless unless it can combine with another pars orationis in order to consignify or signify syntactically (3). Thomas tells us that the 'ratio consignificandi' refers to the principium ~~formale~~ <sup>formale</sup> (4), i.e. the potential constructible, and the 'ratio consignificandi activa' refers to the principium ~~efficiente~~ <sup>efficiente</sup> (5), i.e. the actualised combination of constructibles into a construction (6); this last is very similar to Siger's mode of consignification which implies that the pars is ready to signify functionally, i.e. syntactically, since it presupposes the capability to signify, the vox (7), and the significatio, i.e. the primary or referential meaning (8). Consignificatio in

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: rationem significandi, quae vocatur significatio, per quam efficitur signum vel significans; et sic formaliter est dictio. Thomas of Erfurt, #18: dictio est vox significativa.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #18: pars orationis formaliter est per modum significandi activum, dictioni superadditam, quia pars orationis est dictio, ut habet modum significandi activum.
  - 3) cf. Firth's definition of 'meaning by usage'.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: pars est pars secundum se per hanc rationem consignificandi, seu modum significandi activum, tanquam per principium formale...rationem consignificandi, quae vocatur modus significandi activus, per quam vox significans fit consignum, vel consignificans; et sic formaliter est pars orationis. (my italics).
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: sed est pars relata ad aliam per eadem rationem consignificandi activam, tanquam per principium efficiens intrinsecum.
  - 6) cf. 5.221 and 5.222.
  - 7) cf. 4.11.
  - 8) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: modus consignificandi per quem pars est pars praesupponit rationem significandi, vocem et significatum.



such a collocation suggests syntactic-meaning, which results from its functional combination with other partes orationis.'

In other contexts and collocations, consignificatio seems to imply connotation, secondary ~~semantic~~ meaning; there are not many instances of such usage, and Thomas applies it to a description of certain accidental modes (1), thereby implying that the mode in question, e.g. tempus in the verb (2), is a means used by the pars in question to describe semantic features in addition to those features which are described by means of the primary meaning of its essential mode, e.g. modus entis in the nomen.

### 3.12. Terminology of the Etymologia

This group of terms refers to the language of description particularly of the partes orationis (3): modus, though not difficult in itself to explain, must be included on three counts, a) by virtue of its relationship with ratio and consignificare which were discussed in the preceding section (4), b) by reason of its use as a generic term in the whole Modistic scheme of presenting a semantic dress for every grammatical feature (5), and c) since it is used with an entirely different meaning to describe an accidental mode of the verb (6), a

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1) i.e. case, person, tense, etc.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #147: tempus est modus significandi accidentalis verbi, quo mediante verbum, citra rem, modum temporis consignificat.

3) cf. Chapter V.

4) cf. p. 81-2.

5) cf. 3.01 and 4.2.

6) cf. 5.1122.



category known to traditional and modern grammarians alike as 'mood' and which has a very close connection with three other terms to be discussed in this section, i.e. compositio, significatio and genus.

Modus and ratio are found, especially in Thomas, in the similar collocations of signandi, intelligendi, significandi and consignificandi, the difference between them being similar to that of act and potentiality (1), modus representing act and ratio potentiality, i.e. the actualisation of the potentiality of something: thus the modus signandi is the act of the dictio which has also the potential ability to signify (ratio significandi) (2). Thomas states, therefore, that a pars orationis is such by means of the ratio consignificandi or the modus significandi activus, i.e. the pars possesses the active mode of signifying, i.e. the means of signifying which makes it a grammatical functionive (3) and also the potentiality of consignifying (ratio consignificandi) (4), i.e. of having meaning at the syntactic level in addition to its primary referential meaning.

Modus is also used by the Modistae to designate the various grammatical and pre-grammatical categories (5), since every grammatical feature must be described in terms of some mode or

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- 1) cf. p.76.
  - 2) cf. p.111.
  - 3) cf. 4.14.
  - 4) cf. p.112.
  - 5) cf. 4.2.



other (1): following on from the discussion of the contrast between *modus* and *ratio*, every grammatical feature must possess actuality rather than mere potentiality before it can be considered a perfect complete feature (2).

Thus each stage, i.e. *essendi*, *intelligendi*, *significandi* becomes complete and self-contained by means of its particular mode, and so we have, even at the pre-grammatical level, the complete stages of *modus essendi* and *modus intelligendi*, leading to the *modus significandi*; which in turn is made up of a number of complete, self-contained components (3). Thus a *pars orationis* will be described in terms of its various modes of signifying, none of which overlap but all of which are necessary for a complete description of the *pars*, and it might even be argued that the mode of consignification (*modus consignificandi*) should also be added since this described the *pars* by means of its syntactic meaning (and connotations).

Mention was made of the third meaning of *modus*, i.e. mood which by itself presents no great problem of interpretation to the grammarian; however, in conjunction with *compositio*, *significatio* and *genus* (4), it presents an interesting theoretical approach to the problem of defining the relationship between the *nomen suppositum* and the verb (5), and the verb and nominal

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1) cf. 3.01.

2) If we consider '*modus*' as act and '*ratio*' as potentiality, only '*modus*' can be used to complete the description of the feature, since a form must be actualised before it can be considered complete and perfect.

3) cf. 4.24: 4.241, 4.242, 4.243, 4.244, 4.245.

4) cf. 5.1122.

5) cf. p.352.



oblique (1) in constructions such as "Socrates currit" and "lego librum". This theory is found in Thomas only and demonstrates an approach which would not be unfamiliar to many modern linguists (2). For reasons such as the structure of the favourite sentence-types of Latin, and the requirements of formal logic (3), Thomas considered only two types of construction, i.e. intransitive and transitive (4), the first being made up of nomen and verb (NV) and the second of verb and nominal oblique (VN) (5); by definition, the verb is discrete from the nominal subject (6), and Thomas introduces, therefore, the accidental mode of compositio to restore the relationship between the nominal subject and verb (7) and mood (modus) becomes, as a result, the quality of this compositio (8), i.e. the relationship or predication of NV remains basically constant but it can be expressed by means of different qualities and will do so by means of mood. Significatio provides the balance to compositio, since significatio expresses the relationship between the verb and the post-posed

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- 1) cf. p. 352.
  - 2) i.e. Thomas's constructions can be considered a primitive form of endocentric and exocentric constructions, and his analytical procedure a rudimentary form of Immediate Constituent analysis, cf. 5.24.
  - 3) cf. p. ~~510-11~~: ~~225~~: 508.
  - 4) He does not list the subordinating conjunctions nor does he mention subordinate clauses, except to draw attention to the subordinate clause and its incompleteness by virtue of its dependence on something outside the clause, and completion of dependence is one of the criteria for a constructio perfecta, cf. 5.233.
  - 5) cf. p. ~~550-1~~, and also 5.241 and 5.242.
  - 6) cf. 5.112.
  - 7) cf. 5.1122, p. 346.
  - 8) cf. 5.1122, p. 351.



nominal oblique found in all transitive constructions (1), and just as the basic relationship of NV remains constant, so the basic relationship of VN remains constant but can employ different qualities in the expression of this relationship, and the accidental mode of voice (genus) is created to describe these different relational qualities (2). Compositio and significatio can thus be said to control the colligations (3) of NV and VN respectively in the primary favourite sentence-type of Latin.

The term Genus is used by the Modistae in three senses; the first, i.e. voice, has just been discussed and the second, i.e. gender, can be classified, like the first, as a well-known grammatical category and requires no further explanation. The third usage, albeit very sparing, might be classified as a logical term adapted to grammatical description; it is used in conjunction with species (4) and specific differences (differentia specifica) since a species is made up of genus and differentia specifica (5) which can correspond in this particular case to the contrast of matter and form (6), genus representing the matter and differentia specifica the form and

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1) cf. 5.24 and 5.242.

2) cf. 5.1122, p.359-68.

3) cf. J.R. Firth, *A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory (1930-1955)*, *Studies in Linguistic Analysis*.

4) *Siger de Courtrai*, p.95: sicut ad constitutionem speciei concurrunt genus et differentia specifica, sic ad constitutionem partis concurrent modus significandi generalis et specificus.

5) cf. fn.4, p.197: fn.1, p.198.

6) cf. p.71-77.



combining to produce the species, and this of course represents the general mode, i.e. genus and the specific mode, i.e. differentia specifica, which combine to produce the essential mode of signifying of the pars orationis in question (1) though neither mode can exist without the other (2).

Species in this sense can be taken to mean 'type', so that Thomas can use the term, when discussing compositio as a feature of the verb, to say that compositio is not an essential mode since it does not constitute any particular type (species) of verb (3). Species is, however, used by the Modistae in a much more technical sense, and along with figura (4), they are accidental modes of the nomen and verb (5), (they are also found in other partes orationis); they are both absolute modes(6), and as such have no syntactic function, though this does not of course affect the syntactical operations as a result of the other accidental modes of the pars to which they belong (7). Both species and figura are derivational items - the term

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1) cf. p. 143: 198.

2) This is clearly implied in p. 86, and also in Siger's argument that an indeclinable pars must possess an essential mode made up of the general and specific modes, cf. 5.12.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #128: nec est essentialis specialis, cum non constituat aliquam speciem verbi.

4) a) Thomas of Erfurt, #68: species est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, ~~mediante~~, mediante quo modum significandi primum vel secundarium significat.

b) Thomas of Erfurt, #82: figura est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, mediante quo, nomen proprietatem simplicis, compositi, vel decompositi significat.

5) cf. 5.1112 and 5.1122.

6) cf. 4.243.

7) cf. p. 246.



'derivational' is here used in its synchronic, not its diachronic sense (1); species might be said to represent type and figura the 'skhema' as used by Dionysius Thrax (2), but they were clearly not set up by means of the formal (3) criteria which such categories would be given in a modern structural description. Species is divided into simple (primitiva) and derived (determinativa, or derivativa in the case of Thomas) (4), and figura, which might also be equated to 'skhema' (5), is divided into simple (simplex), compound (composita), and double-compound, i.e. derived from a compound word (decomposita) (6). Species is described by criteria which could not, even by a stretch of the imagination, be regarded as remotely formal (7); species is defined, in effect, in terms of primary and derived or secondary meaning (8), which is able to produce a reasonable explanation for 'montanus' as a species derived from 'mons' (9), but on the other hand, this non-formal procedure will produce monstrosities such as 'albus' being derived from 'albedo' (10),

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- 1) cf. p.246, fn.2.
  - 2) cf. R.F.Robins, Thrax, p.99.
  - 3) This is the modern sense of the term.
  - 4) cf. p. 251.
  - 5) R.F.Robins, Thrax, p.99.
  - 6) cf. p. 255.
  - 7) cf. p.249-50.
  - 8) cf. 5.1112, p.248-49.
  - 9) Thomas of Erfurt, #38: mons primitivae speciei est, quia significat rem sub essentia primaria...: sed montanus derivativae speciei est, quia significat rem sub esse secundario, quae est essentia comparata.
  - 10) Thomas of Erfurt, #67: albus descendit ab albedine.



since for the Modistae the property of 'whiteness' must exist before the quality of 'white' can be obtained (1).

The Modistae described 'figura' in rather more formal terms (2) than they did 'species', and it is possible to equate their description of this feature to a more modern morphological description of stem plus derivational affix: Thomas goes so far as to argue that figura is not derived from the property of the vox, but from the property of the thing to be expressed (3); a simple form, e.g. pauper, cannot be divided into component parts (4), a compound form, e.g. equiferus, is dividable into its component parts, even if the components have different meanings when treated separately than in combination (5) (as in the well-known example of 'green' 'house' and 'green-house'). Siger does not consider the double-compound form to be a separate category but merely a form derived (determinata) from a compound form (6), e.g.

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1) cf. 5.1112, p. 251.

2) cf. p.255.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #79: figura...non accipitur a proprietate vocis...figura sumitur a proprietate rei.

4) Siger de Courtrai, p.102: figura simplex est figura designans circa rem modum essendi indivisionis intelligendo indivisionem non solum quantum ad rem sed quantum ad intellectum ut apparet in 'n' et 'x' et huius modi, cuius partes separatae nihil significant nec valent significare.

5) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: licet partes nominis compositae figurae, ut partes, propinque, sunt et in actu talis nominis nihil significant separatae, quia sunt partes, incompositae, ...tamen partes nominis compositione figurae remote, in potentia, partes secundum se consideratae, bene aliquid significant separatae et idem quod in composito vel non penitus idem.

6) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: figura decomposita non designat circa rem aliquem modum essendi distinctum a praedictis... sola determinatio ex composito est figura decompositae figurae.



magnanimitas, and it cannot therefore be broken down into meaningful component parts (1). Figura is thus a descriptive category for a word, but this is not done in morphological *(in the modern sense of morphology)* terms, but in terms of the meaning or lack of meaning of the component parts.

### 3.13. Terminology of the Diasynthetica

The greatest wealth and complexity of terminology is found in the section dealing with Modistic syntactic theories, which, strictly speaking, lie outside the immediate subject matter of this thesis. Reference, however, will be made, and frequently so, to the degree of interpenetration between the levels of etymologia and diasynthetica, and many of the ideas of the Modistae on the partes orationis can be clarified by a 'forward' reference to their syntax, e.g. principium and terminus (2) as features of the case-system (3), especially as many of the technical terms used in syntax can be found scattered throughout the section on etymologia. Furthermore, the Modistae viewed the partes orationis as something more than isolated words, and their conception of the major partes orationes was conditioned by factors other than the metaphysics of a reality, factors such as the structure of the favourite

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: non potest esse simplicis figurae et a composita, quia id non potest esse composite quod non potest dividi in partes intelligibiles; nunc magnanimitas est huius modi quia "animitas" per se non dicitur, ideo non potest esse compositae figurae: est ergo decompositae pro tanto quia a composito determinatur.
  - 2) these terms will be discussed shortly, cf. p. 945.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #85: casus est modus significandi accidentalibus nominis, mediante quo, nomen proprietatem principii, vel termini consignificat.



sentence-types of Latin, so that the partes orationis, especially the declinable partes, were conceived, even if they were not formally so defined, with their syntactic functions included as a latent factor; clearly then it is impossible to make any assessment of Modistic grammatical theories and their treatment of the partes orationis without some consideration of their technical language used in describing grammatical features which are not immediately connected with their word-class theories, and this alone should justify consideration of their syntactic technical language, not to mention the fact that without it, the section on Etymologia will be difficult, if indeed possible, to understand.

A construction (constructio) (1), at least for Thomas, is made up of two constructibles, one of which will be the dependent (2) constructible and the other will be the terminant (2) constructible, and the nature of the dependence will decide the type of construction: if the first member is the dependent constructible, the construction is described as a transitive (3) construction which can be further divided into 'constructio transitive actuum' (4) in which the dependent constructible must be a verb, in which case we have a

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, #185: unius constructionis non sunt plura, vel pauciora duobus; quia...constructio causatur ex dependentia unius constructibilis ad alterum.

2) cf. p.552.

3) cf. p.554.

4) cf. 5.2421.



construction such as "lego librum" consisting of a verb and oblique nominal form (1) and represents one favourite sentence type of Latin. The second type of transitive construction is the 'constructio transitiva personarum' (2) in which the dependent constructible must be a nomen substantivum, so that we have "filius Socratis", of which 'filius' is the dependent constructible (3). The other fundamental type of construction is the intransitive (4) type, which too can be divided into 'actuum' and 'personarum', and as in the case of the transitive constructions, 'actuum' requires a verb (5) for the dependent constructible and 'personarum' a nomen (or any other pars) for the dependent (6), but the intransitive construction requires the second constructible to be the dependent constructible: we have therefore, as an instance of a 'constructio intransitiva actuum', the construction "Socrates currit", in which the verb or appositum (7) 'currit' is dependent on the nomen subject or suppositum (7) 'Socrates' and represents another favourite sentence-type of Latin: as an instance of a 'constructio intransitiva personarum' we have "equus albus" in which 'albus'

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #212: constructio transitiva actuum est in qua constructibile dependens per modum actus significat.
  - 2) cf. 5.2423.
  - 3) This is quite different from a modern description, since either member of a construction can be the head.
  - 4) cf. p. 556.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #195: constructio intransitiva actuum est in qua constructibile dependens per modum actus significat.
  - 6) Thomas of Erfurt, #195: constructio intransitiva personarum est in qua constructibile dependens significat per modum substantiae, vel quomodolibet aliter.
  - 7) cf. p. 557.



is dependent on 'equus'. In the case of a construction, in which a constructible depends on the pre-posed suppositum as in "Socrates currit", this first member, i.e. Socrates, will be ~~per~~ the principium (1), and in the case of a construction in which the dependent constructible is the first member, as in "lego librum", the constructible 'librum' will be the terminus (2).

The terms 'transitivus' and 'intransitivus', as used by the Modistae, should not be confused with these terms in traditional or structural use: in traditional grammar, the term 'transitive' or 'intransitive' is applied to verbs which can or cannot take an object, whereas the Modistae apply these terms to explain the relationships and positions of the two members of a construction, so that a sentence such as "Socrates percutit Platonem" consists of two constructions, i.e. the intransitive "Socrates percutit" and the transitive "percutit Platonem" (3), since in every construction the subject, as either in the above construction or in "lego librum", is automatically subsumed (4). The terms 'suppositum' and 'appositum' were derived from logic to express the SP relationship of the favourite sentence type: the suppositum

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1) cf. p. 548.

2) cf. p. 548.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #185: "Socrates percutit Platonem", hic propter diversas dependentias verbi ad suppositum ante se, et ad obliquum post se, non potest esse una constructio.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #195: omne verbum requirit suppositum sive sit personale, sive impersonale, sive finitum, sive infinitum.



is in fact the substantive element, although it may possess a determinant (1), and the appositum clearly refers to a verb only - its definition is almost exactly the same as the definition of the verb (2). It must be stressed that 'appositum', as used by the Modistae, is not synonymous with the predicate as used in traditional or modern grammar - the appositum refers to the verb only (3), and indeed the term seems to refer only to the verb used in the constructio intransitiva of the N V type.

The term 'principium' and 'terminus' are applied to the substantival element in the two types of construction just outlined, i.e. principium refers to the suppositum in the N V type of construction (4) and terminus to the oblique nominal form in the V N type of construction (5). These terms are also used by Thomas in his analysis of the case-system of the nomen (6); it is clear that Thomas considered word-order to be a criterion of syntactic function, so that principium and terminus, in describing the genitive case (7), become the criteria for differentiating the functional value of the genitive in instances such as "Socratis <sup>interest</sup> ~~auctoritas~~" in which the genitive form is the principium,

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1) cf. p. 560.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #195: cum appositum significet per modum distantis a supposito. cf. also 5.112.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #225: haec distantia est inter suppositum et appositum, ex hoc quod solum verbum est appositum, quod per modum distantis se habet. Contrast C.F. Hockett, A Course in Modern Linguistics, p. 204.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: quod ante se dependet ad suppositum dependet ad ipsum ut ad principium et ad primum.

5) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: quod post se dependet ad obliquum, dependet ad ipsum ut ad terminum et ultimum.

6) cf. 5.1112, p. 285-6.

7) cf. 5.1112, p. 290.



and in "misereor Socratis" in which the genitive is the terminus - these criteria can be applied to other cases. There is, of course, a close link between the various case-forms and their criteria of principium and terminus, and between principium and terminus as equivalent terms for the suppositum and the oblique nominal form of the transitive construction (1); Thomas states that only a case-form can be a suppositum (2) which, by definition, is the principium, and he also argues that case-forms are required in the oblique terminus (3).

Another use of principium by certain Modistae, e.g. Michel de Marbais and Siger de Courtrai, is the concept of 'principium constructionis (4), by means of which Siger and Michel included as criteria for the partes orationis the fact that the pars in question was capable of becoming a member of a construction by virtue of this particular feature. The definition of principium especially, but also of terminus, can be realised largely as a result of their collocations, e.g. ratio principii in supposito, ratio termini in obliquo, principium constructionis, etc. Principium thus represents the nominal element of a primary exocentric construction of Latin and terminus the nominal element of a primary endocentric

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- 1) Compare Thomas's analysis of case as a feature of the nomen and his analysis of the suppositum and obliquum, cf. 5.1112 and p. 547-49.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #195: nihil supponat, nisi casus, vel habens casum.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #214: cui correspondet in obliquo modus significandi per modum termini absolute modo conformi casuum contrahibilis.
  - 4) cf. 5.211.



construction.

Dependentia (1) and determinatio (2), dependence and determination express the basic relationships between the members of any construction, dependentia representing the general relationships, and determinatio a specific relationship. Whether the construction be intransitive or transitive, one member must always be the dependent member (3), and will in fact be the verb (4) in the NV and the VN constructions. The constructio intransitiva personarum, the NN type of construction (5), while still possessing the basic relationship of terminant and dependent, represents also the specific relationship of determinant and determinable (6) and the determinant serves to determine either member of the basic NV construction; the determinant constructible can be either a declinable or indeclinable pars (7), so that we can have a complex intransitive construction, in which the suppositum will be determined by an adjective, and the appositum by an adverb, e.g.:

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #185: una dependentia non est nisi duorum, scilicet: dependentis, et determinantis.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #195: constructio intransitiva personarum sit determinabilis cum determinatione.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: constructibilium unum sit dependens, alterum dependentiam terminans.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: omne verbum significat rem suam per modum significandi dependentis.
  - 5) N = Nomen: V = Verb: NN is used to symbolise the constructio intransitiva personarum, cf. 5.2413.
  - 6) cg. 5.2413
  - 7) Thomas of Erfurt, #204: si determinatio addatur supposito, hoc est duplicatur: vel haec determinatio est declinabilis, vel indeclinabilis.





in which 'homo' is the substantive determined by 'albus' and 'currit' the appositum determined by 'bene', but the adjective depends on the substantive, the adverb depends on the verb, and furthermore the verb depends on the suppositum.

The second stage of Modistic syntax was congruitas (1) which is roughly equivalent to 'congruence', but seems in fact to represent not only the agreements of government and concord but also the proper collocations of the constructibles in their contexts of situation (2): indeed congruitas would seem to be the controlling factor in the creation of any construction since it is responsible for the mutual appropriateness of the modes of signifying and ensures that one constructible will show the same features as the other (3).

Thurot states (4) that the term 'regere' to express 'government' was well established by the time of Peter Helias, and that by the 13th century there was a tendency to distinguish between 'regere', 'servire' and 'determinare': the Modistae make little if any use of these terms - Thomas does not use 'regere' at all, nor do Thomas or Siger use 'determinare' in the sense of government, and 'determinare' as a syntactic term has already

- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #221: congruitas..est..partium sermonis debita unio, ex modorum significandi conformitate ad aliquam speciem constructionis requisitorum derelicta.
- 2) cf. J.R.Firth, Papers in Linguistics, for the use of these terms.
- 3) cf. 5.232, p. 533.
- 4) Ch. Thurot, Op.cit., p. 239-43.



been discussed (1). Siger and Thomas do not use 'servire' although Thomas and Siger do use 'deservire' in discussing the preposition and the cases that the prepositions govern but offers no discussion of the use of this term (2). Siger makes some use of the terms 'regere' and 'regimen', though it is not easy to establish with any certainty, in view of the fact that the term occurs only in his *Sophismata*, whether and how he would have made consistent use of the term to express the syntactic device of government: Siger likened regimen to the state of affairs in natural things, i.e. in the animal kingdom we find one animal, e.g. man, who is fit to govern all the other animals, and similarly in the human body, there is one member, i.e. the heart, which governs all the other members. Therefore, there will be among the *partes orationis* one *pars* which will properly govern the other *partes* but will itself not be governed, i.e. the verb (3), which acts therefore as a pivot as in a complex construction such as "*Socrates percutit Platonem*" (4).

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1) cf. p. 96

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #178: sic praepositio simpliciter sumpta dividitur in praepositiones deservientes accusativo tantum, et in praepositiones deservientes ablativo tantum, et in praepositiones deservientes utrique. This is quoted as a typical instance of Thomas's use of the term 'deservire' which he uses in the preposition only.

3) Siger de Courtrai, p.139: ad similitudinem huius sumitur regimen inter partes orationis, ita quod est devenire ad aliquam partem orationis dignissimam respectu talis multitudinis, quia multitudinem et orationem complet, quae proprie regit omnes alias partes et a nulla alia regitur, videlicet verbum.

4) cf. p. 525.



Thomas used the terms similitudo (1) and proportio (2) to describe the different relationships between the members of any construction, and although similitudo equates, to a very large extent, to concord, the relative similarity of proportio to government is not nearly so close. Siger too uses the term 'proportio', but in a more general sense of concord and government, e.g. he describes as proportionality the requirement for the mode of becoming (*modus fieri*) in the appositum by association with the mode of permanence (*modus entis et habitus*) of the suppositum (3), and he also describes as proportionality the concord of gender (4); furthermore, he states that a 'concordant' construction (*constructio congrua*) is achieved by means of proportionality (5).

Thomas uses similitudo and proportio to describe the basic types of syntactic relationships: similitudo can be equated to concord, e.g. of gender, since in a dependent relationship of

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt #220: quandoque constructibile dependens habet aliquos modos significandi, non ex proprietatibus suae rei per se, sed ex proprietatibus rei constructibilis terminantis; et tunc illos modos significandi exigitur similitudo.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: si constructibile dependens habet aliquos modos significandi ex proprietatibus suae rei per se et non ex proprietatibus rei constructibilis terminantis tunc exigitur in illos modos significandi proportio.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: modus significandi per modum fieri seu motus seu esse in apposito proportionatur modo significandi per modum substantiae, permanentis habitus seu entis.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p.101: genus est principium constructionis cum genere proportionali, scilicet, masculini cum masculino etc., cuius ratio est tum quia in re masculus et femella proportionem non habet ad invicem.
  - 5) Siger de Courtrai, p.153: omnis constructio congrua est per modos significandi proportionales.



substantive and adjective or suppositum and verb, the dependent constructible will acquire certain properties from the terminant constructible and not from itself (1), i.e. the adjective acquires gender, number and person from the nomen, and the verb acquires number and person from the substantive suppositum: such a relationship is similitudo. Proportio expresses a relationship which we shall call 'government', though it implies more than the conventional idea of government, i.e. the different case-forms in the substantive oblique which are governed by the verb (2), but does not imply the government of the case-form by the preposition. Proportio is used to express in combination with compositio and significatio (3), the relationships between the suppositum and the verb or the nominal oblique and the verb (4): compositio and significatio set up these relationships but proportio is required for two purposes, to ensure the appropriateness of the case-forms in the suppositum and oblique (5) and also to ensure the proportionality of the modus entis in the suppositum or oblique with the modus esse

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1) cf. fn. 2, p.99.

2) cf. L. Bloomfield, Language, p.192.

3) cf. 5.1122 for the description of these accidental modes; also 3.12, p.84-6.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #144: sicut verbum per modum compositionis exigit modum entis per se stantis in ratione principii in supposito, sic per modum generis exigit modum entis per se stantis in ratione termini in obliquo.

5) Thomas of Erfurt, #144: sicut verbum per modos proportionales casibus modo verbi superadditos, exigit in supposito rationem principii, aliter et aliter coniunctam; sic etiam verbum per modos proportionales casibus generi verbi superadditis exigit in obliquo rationem termini, aliter et aliter coniunctam, et ex consequenti alium et alium obliquum.   
 *et ex consequenti alium et alium suppositum*



in the verb (1); proportio is also used to ensure the proportionality of the mode of adjectivality (modus adiacentis) in the adjective and the mode of substantivisation (modus per se stantis) in the substantive (2). Proportio might therefore be described as a syntactic linkage and complementation, and which also functions in combination with compositio and significatio to express the government of the suppositum and verb, and verb and nominal oblique.

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #113: huic modo verbi, qui est modus esse et successionis, proportionatur in supposito et in obliquo modus entis, id est, modus habitus permanentis.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: quia adiectivum habet modum adiacentis proprie et de proprietatibus suae rei, ideo per huiusmodi modum adiacentis requirit in subiecto modum per se stantis qui est sibi proportionabilis.



Chapter IV.Metallanguage.

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4.243 Modus significandi absolutus et respectivus.

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Chapter IV.Metalinguage.4.0 Introduction.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and discuss the technical language of the Modistae, and their general descriptive methodology, i.e., the structure of their system of description. The treatment adopted follows roughly the procedure used by the Modistae, which was to divide their analysis into three parts;

- a) the preamble, which is the more immediate concern of this chapter; Martin of Dacia called this the 'pars prohemialis' (1), while John of Dacia calls it 'Proemium', which he divided into
  - i) Principia grammatice in communi, and
  - ii) Principia grammatice in speciali. Thomas of Erfurt calls his introduction 'Prooemium Auctoris'; Siger de Courtrai does not give his introductory section any title, but they all use the introduction for more or less the same purpose. Thomas, moreover, is much more detailed than Siger in his analysis of the modus significandi, though less so in his description of the process leading up to the modus significandi; he is also, so we are told (2), very similar in this to Martin of Dacia;
- b) the modi significandi of the eight partes orationis, and
- c) the "passiones sermonis", the mutual relationship of the

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1) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p.141.

2) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p. 141.



modi significandi of the partes orationis, which are discussed in terms of their constructions, the congruencies of such constructions and the perfection of these constructions. No more will be said about b) and c) at this stage, since they do in fact constitute the material of the next chapter.

#### 4.01 Order of Analysis

The consideration of the preamble of each Modistic treatise has been somewhat arbitrarily divided into two divisions; any such arbitrary divisioning will of course entail a certain degree of overlap. The first part is called 'elements', and the second part 'categories'. There is a necessary relationship between the two systems, but in the following discussion they will in the first place be kept discrete, the object of so doing being to show the sequence with them from vox<sup>x</sup> to pars orationis on the one hand, and from modus essendi to modus significandi essentialis and accidentalis on the other.

The Modistae excluded phonic material from their descriptive process; nevertheless their conception of linguistic description requires 'vox' despite the fact that at the outset 'vox' appears to be somewhat isolated and excluded from their linguistic system - presumably because the Modistae do exclude phonetics from grammar - one might indeed ask what the semantic value of vox is in any Modistic grammatical system; however, combined with meaning, 'vox'



becomes an integral part of the system (1) which culminates in the pars orationis, the key-stone of their grammatical system. It is their picture of the pars orationis and its component parts and combinations which inspires their theories of connected discourse, even of grammar itself.

The second part is called 'categories': the sequence which produces the pars orationis has just been suggested. The next step is the description and analysis of such a pars orationis as a grammatical unit; this requires another type of description which is the very heart of Modistic descriptive technique and their whole system and conception of grammar depended on this analysis - even syntax has to be considered in the light of this metalanguage. This is then the high-point of Modistic methodology, and from there to a consideration of the various partes orationis in course is a necessary and logical step.

There is a further methodological item which has already been briefly mentioned and which must now be discussed in more detail. Siger and Thomas, we have said, were roughly alike in the treatment of their preambles, but Thomas was more detailed in his presentation. This is perhaps an overstatement.

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: vox, mediante modo significandi, significat ipsam rem, sic, mediante modo significandi activo significat modum essendi seu proprietatem rei.



Siger begins with a brief discussion of grammar, which is the proper expression of concepts of the mind (1); the concept can be either uncompounded, in which case it will be expressed by means of a dictio or pars orationis, or compounded, in which case it will be expressed by a sentence (2). The mind perceives 'ens', i.e. things which exist, and the partes orationis are distinguished by the properties of the things observed by the mind; therefore we cannot distinguish the partes orationis unless we have first established the properties of the things which are to be signified in the form of partes orationis. Siger thus asserts and establishes the necessary link between the modus essendi and the modus significandi on the one hand, and the thing with its properties and the pars orationis which expresses it in the form of significant speech on the other (3). From the modus essendi Siger proceeds to the modus intelligendi which he divides into activus and passivus; the modus intelligendi leads to the modus signandi, which too divides into activus

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.134: grammatica..est propter expressionem conceptus mentis per sermonem congruum.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.93: conceptus mentis duplex est: unus est simplex et indivisibilis, scilicet, conceptus dictionum seu partium quae per simplicem sermonem exprimuntur:...alius est conceptus mentis compositus seu constitutus, scilicet orationum quae per sermonem compositum exprimuntur. Siger also refers to a similar division in Priscian, i.e. into Volumen Maior and Volumen Minor.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: vox, mediante modo significandi, significat ipsam rem.



and passivus<sup>(1)</sup>. It is at this stage that he introduces the term 'dictio', since the vox now becomes a dictio 'formaliter',<sup>(2)</sup> by means of this modus signandi<sup>(3)</sup>. The modus signandi is followed by the modus significandi which also divides into activus and passivus; it is at this stage that the vox becomes a pars orationis<sup>(4)</sup>. He then describes the modus significandi in terms of its absolute, respective, essential, and accidental modes, ending in the modus of consignifying (modus consignificandi)<sup>(5)</sup>, by virtue of which a pars is 'really' a pars orationis in that it now acquires syntactic meaning. The pars orationis consists, Siger tells us, of (a) the mode of consignifying (modus consignificandi) which presupposes the modus essendi - this presupposition represents the nexus of the extremes of the metalanguage beginning with the modus essendi and culminating in the modus consignificandi, (b) the ability to signify

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: modum intelligendi sequitur modus seu ratio-signandi quia prius intelligitur res et etiam concipitur antequam per vocem signetur quia voces sunt signa passionum..Modus seu ratio signandi duplex est.
- (2) cf. p. 110:134:161.
- (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: per quam rationem signandi vox formaliter dicitur dictio.
- (4) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: vox formaliter dicitur pars orationis per modum significandi activum.
- (5) cf. p.76:111-15.



(ratio significandi)<sup>(1)</sup> which presupposes the meaning<sup>(2)</sup>, and (c) the vox which presupposes the thing which is to be signified<sup>(3)</sup>. In this last part we shall see that Thomas and Siger are very close<sup>(4)</sup>.

Thomas's use of the preamble is in many ways quite different from Siger's and is much more grammatical (i.e. as opposed to ontological), in that he pays much less attention to the modus essendi and modus intelligendi; he makes no use of the modus signandi, a mode which may be linguistic though it is certainly not grammatical, and indeed many linguists today would query its pertinence to linguistic theory.

Roos tells us<sup>(5)</sup> that Martin of Dacia, like Thomas leads in with the modus significandi, and since the modus significandi, is the principle, i.e. the starting point (principium) of grammar, they use the preamble to discuss the hypothesis of this principle. Thomas begins by asking

(1) cf. p. 78-9: III.

(2) Siger de Courtrai uses 'significatus' whereas Thomas of Erfurt uses 'significatio'.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: pars est dictio et vox, ideo modus consignificandi per quem pars est pars praesupponit rationem significandi, vocem et significatum, quia modus consignificandi non potest esse vocis non significativae et ita ad partem concurrunt modus consignificandi praesupponens modum essendi et ratio significandi praesupponens significatum, et vox praesupponens rem natam per eam significari.

(4) cf. Appendix A.

(5) H. Roos, Op.cit., p.141.



six questions (1):

- (i) how is the *modus significandi* divided and described;
- (ii) from what does the *modus significandi* originate;
- (iii) on what is the *modus significandi* dependent;
- (iv) in what way are the *modus essendi*, *modus intelligendi* and *modus significandi* differentiated;
- (v) how is the *modus significandi* ascertainable;
- (vi) what is the mutual relationship between the terms, *signum*, *dictio*, *pars orationis*, *terminus*.

It should be noted that Thomas does not include *vox* in this last question: he does in fact discuss *vox* to this extent, that it is not considered by the grammarian except in so far as it is a *signum*, since grammar deals with "*signa rerum*"; therefore *vox* in the sense of "phonetics" (2) is not considered by the grammarian except '*per accidens*' (3). It

- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #2: i) *quomodo modus significandi partiatur et describatur.*  
 ii) *a quo modus significandi radicaliter oriatur.*  
 iii) *a quo modus significandi immediate sumatur.*  
 iv) *quomodo modus significandi a modo intelligendi et a modo essendi distinguatur.*  
 v) *in quo modus significandi tanquam in subiecto inveniat.*  
 vi) *qualem ordinem habeant ad invicem isti termini, signum, dictio, pars orationis, et terminus.*
- (2) cf. p. 128. The fact that the *Modistae* do not consider '*vox*' in the sense of phonetics to be a matter for the grammarian does not prevent '*vox*' from being a unit in the expression: for this reason, it is maintained that '*vox*' can be considered to have a 'phonological' function.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #19: *vox, inquantum vox, non consideratur a grammatico, sed inquantum signum, quia grammatica est de signis rerum..ideo grammaticus considerans vocem, considerat eam per accidens.*



is interesting to note that at no time during the preamble does Thomas provide a definition of *modus intelligendi* or *modus significandi*, but their active and passive forms are defined, and the combination of the definitions of the active and passive will, as a result, constitute the definition of the whole mode, i.e. of understanding or signifying.

The definitions of Siger and Thomas of the *modus intelligendi activus et passivus* and the *modus significandi activus et passivus* have little if anything to choose between them, and their conclusions are essentially the same, i.e. that the vox becomes a *pars orationis* by means of the *modus significandi activus* (1).

It would be useful, however, to compare briefly the one stage where there is an apparent discrepancy between them, i.e. their analysis of the origin of the dictio. Siger had used the *modus* or *ratio signandi activus* as the means whereby the vox becomes a dictio 'formaliter' (2), i.e. it is the ability (*ratio* or *ens rationis* (3)) bestowed on the vox by the mind by means of which the vox can indicate the thing (4); Thomas states that the mind bestows on

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: vox formaliter dicitur pars orationis per modum significandi activum.

(2) cf. p. 134: 161 .

(3) cf. p. 78-9 .

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: *modus* seu *ratio signandi activus* est *ratio* quaedam seu *ens rationis* concessum voci ab intellectu secundum quod talis vox talem rem signat.



the vox a double ability (ratio), that of signifying and consignifying <sup>(1)</sup>: the first he calls signification (significatio) by means of which the vox becomes a signum, and this is 'formaliter' a dictio <sup>(2)</sup>. We have, however, seen <sup>(3)</sup> that 'ratio' in collocation with 'significandi' or 'consignificandi' represents the potentiality of the mode, i.e. in this instance, the 'ratio significandi' represents the potentiality of the mode of signifying which will make a dictio into a pars orationis. The difference between Siger and Thomas is more apparent than real; it amounts to the fact that Thomas describes in much more detail the different categories and the relationships of the elements to these categories by exploiting the features of 'ratio' and 'modus' which can be considered the two members of a grammatical opposition which corresponds to the metaphysical contrast of act and potentiality <sup>(4)</sup>.

The second ratio, i.e. of consignifying, which is the potentiality of the mode of signifying <sup>(5)</sup>, Thomas discusses

(1) cf. p. 120-1 .

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~4~~: rationem significandi, quae vocatur significatio, per quam efficitur signum, vel significand; et sic formaliter est dictio.

(3) cf. 3.11, p. 78-9.

(4) cf. 3.11, p. 78 .

(5) cf. 3.11, p. 80-1.



along with the *modus significandi activus*, and by virtue of this combination of *vox* and *ratio consignificandi*, we derive the *pars orationis* 'formaliter' (1). Thomas confirms this by saying that the *pars* is also related to other *partes* by means of this same *ratio consignificandi* which he describes as a '*principium efficiens intrinsecum*', which, he tells us much later (2) is made up of *modi significandi respectivi* which are used to create a construction (3); the *ratio consignificandi* is thus the potential syntactic meaning of the *pars* (4), and by reason of this, the *pars* can function in combination with other *partes orationis*.

Siger, at the end of his preamble, tells us that the *pars* is made up from the *vox* and the *dictio* (5); this is not the end of the process, since this merely means that such a combination is the actualisation of the *ratio significandi* (6)

(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: *et rationem consignificandi, quae vocatur modus significandi activus, per quam vox significans fit consignum, vel consignificans; et sic formaliter est pars orationis.*

(2) cf. 5.223.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #187: *principium efficiens intrinsecum constructionis sunt modi significandi respectivi, ratione quorum vel unum constructibile est ad alterum dependens, vel alterius dependentiam determinans.. hi modi significandi dicuntur efficere constructionem.*

(4) cf. 3.11, p. 81 .

(5) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: *pars est dictio et vox.*

(6) cf. 3.11, p. 81.



and both Siger and Thomas clearly had in mind the fact that the pars orationis possesses a syntactic meaning. Siger completes his statement by describing the mode of consignification (modus consignificandi)<sup>(1)</sup> which is the syntactic meaning of the pars in question, and by means of which<sup>(2)</sup> the pars orationis becomes functional.

It has been argued<sup>(3)</sup> that Siger's modus consignificandi<sup>(4)</sup> can be considered the realisation or actualisation of Thomas's ratio consignificandi<sup>(5)</sup>. Since, however, the modus consignificandi cannot exist alongside the 'vox non significativa', the pars orationis will consist of the mode of consignification (modus consignificandi) which must presuppose the modus essendi, the potentiality of signifying (ratio significandi) presupposing the meaning and the vox presupposing the thing which is to be signified by it<sup>(6)</sup>.

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: modus consignificandi per quem pars est pars praesupponit rationem significandi, vocem et significatum.

(2) cf. 3.11, p. 81.

(3) cf. 3.11, p. 81.

(4) Modus consignificandi can be subsumed under modus significandi activus, and for this reason will not be found separately defined in Appendix B.

(5) cf. 3.11, p. 78-9; Siger does not use the term 'ratio consignificandi' at all, nor does Thomas use the term 'modus consignificandi'; this statement therefore represents a deduction from a synthesis of the descriptions made by Siger and Thomas and the use of the contrast of modus and ratio.

(6) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: ad partem concurrunt modus consignificandi praesupponens modum essendi et ratio significandi praesupponens significatum, et tertio, vox praesupponens rem natam per eam significari.



This is in fact one step further than Thomas's description of the 'pars secundum se' (1), but everything fits into place, if we look upon Thomas's account of the 'pars relata ad aliam' (2) and Siger's pars created by the modus consignificandi as the same; Thomas's 'second' pars is the pars orationis, not considered per se, but ready to function, i.e. with the potentiality of meaning, i.e. functioning syntactically, and so is Siger's, so that 'consignification', which can be called 'functional' or syntactic meaning (3), is necessary before a pars orationis can function syntactically, i.e. a pars orationis must possess the mode of consignification, which necessarily entails the ratio consignificandi, in order to be able to function with other partes orationis in the sentence.

Finally, we have to appreciate that Thomas describes his elements i.e. signum, dictio and pars orationis, discretely (4), though he does, as has already been stated, mention them en passant when analysing the rationes significandi,

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: rationem consignificandi, quae vocatur modus significandi activus, per quam vox significans fit consignum, vel consignificans; et sic formaliter est pars orationis; ita quod pars est pars secundum se per hanc rationem consignificandi, seu modum significandi activum, tanquam per principium formale.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: sed est pars relata ad aliam per eandem rationem consignificandi activam, tanquam per principium efficiens intrinsecum.

(3) cf. 3.11, p. 82.

(4) cf. pp. 81: 132-3: 135: 137: 140.



and consignificandi. He tells us that they can occur together in the same subject for the very reason that they can be discerned in that same subject (1), just like the sign and that which is designated. They differ, however, as regards their potentiality (ratio). The signum becomes such by means of the ratio signandi though it remains an absolute element: the dictio becomes such 'formaliter' by means of the ratio signandi with the addition of vox, because a dictio is a 'vox significativa': but the pars orationis is such 'formaliter' by means of the modus significandi activus added to the dictio, because the pars is the dictio which has acquired a modus significandi activus. If, therefore, we accept that vox is the same as signum, we have a process which can be stated in the following manner:

vox  $\mp$  ratio signandi  $>$  dictio

vox  $\mp$  modus significandi activus  $>$  pars orationis

which is the same as saying, as Thomas does (2)

vox  $\mp$  ratio significandi  $>$  dictio

vox  $\mp$  ratio consignificandi  $>$  pars orationis.

The whole pattern showing the inter-relationship between the various processes and modes can be expressed in the form of an equation.

- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #18: conveniunt in subiecto, et in obiecto; quia in eodem subiecto reperiri possunt, sicut signum et signatum.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: cf. pp. 110-12.



4.1 Elements.

In keeping with the philosophical theories of their day <sup>(1)</sup>, the Modistae stated that things possess various properties or modes of being (modi essendi): the mind apprehends these properties by means of the active modes of understanding (modi intelligendi activi) and they thus become the qualities of things as apprehended by the mind (modi intelligendi passivi); the mind imposes on noises (voces) certain active modes of meaning (modi significandi activi) which become the qualities of things as signified by words (modi significandi passivi), thus completing the scale beginning with the thing and ending with its expression. As a result of this addition of signification, i.e. the potentiality of signifying and consignifying (rationes significandi et consignificandi), the vox becomes a word (dictio) and then a pars orationis. There is a complete interdependence between language on the one hand with the structure of things on the other, and this is central to Modistic grammatical theory, with the human mind, with its ability to perceive, signify and interpret these things in language, acting as the link <sup>(2)</sup>. In language, these things are stated by means of partes orationis, while the modes of signification provide the means of distinguishing

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(1) cf. p. 40-7 .

(2) cf. 3.0. p. 50-2.



the qualities and properties of the things which the partes orationis designate.

The metaphysical series of being, understanding and signification can be paralleled to some extent by the linguistic sequence of vox, dictio and pars orationis; the partes orationis are established by means of the dictio and the meaning which the dictio qua pars will convey; this is expressed by means of the vox. This is neither a purely functional nor a formal approach, although the Modistae did base their partes orationis on the semi-formal categories of Priscian; their approach is semantic. This has an immediate implication, the reasons for which cannot be stated here in detail <sup>(1)</sup> without introducing extra-linguistic matters, but the implication made is that we should not look for any definition of 'sonus' or for that matter of 'vox' in phonetic terminology; in all the texts of the Modistae which are available (with the exception of the Summa Gramatica of John of Dacia), the term 'sonus' is not used at all, and vox <sup>(2)</sup>, though used quite deliberately

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- (1) Although mediaeval Latin was the language of the Church and of scholarship, it possessed no spoken norm but would be pronounced according to the local vernacular; this may explain, to some extent at least, the lack of interest shown by the Modistae in spoken language.
- (2) The operating effect of vox is to set up a series of levels rather reminiscent of Firth's 'spectrum analysis', cf. J.R. Firth, Atlantic Linguistics, Papers in Linguistics, p. 170-1. We have as a result a sequence of symbolisation which changes as a result of the addition of vox which has in itself no individual function.



by the Modistae as a technical term, is given no definition except to repeat Priscian (1).

The Modistae excluded any physiological-acoustic approach to linguistic analysis, phonetics being outside the province of the grammarian, a matter more for the natural philosopher<sup>(2)</sup>; this will account for the absence of any discussion of vox in articulatory-motor terminology. The discreteness between vox and sonus is clearly portrayed in John of Dacia<sup>(3)</sup> and also in William of Sherwood's Introduction in Logicam (quoted by Roos)<sup>(4)</sup>. It is interesting to note that we have here in the statement, "vox ... non significativa, que nil significat ut buba blictrix", a similar idea to that of

(1) Priscian: vocem esse aerem tenuissimum ictum.

(2) Michel de Marbais; Summa modorum significandi: grammaticus unde grammaticus vocem, unde vox est, non debet diffinire sed ipse naturalis ipsam secundum se et secundum suo principia considerans. (quoted by Wallerand, p.46).

(3) John of Dacia, Summa gramatica, p.101: omnis vox est sonus, non tamen econversa. A cursory reading of John's theory of the vox suggests that a closer study would be very profitable, e.g. statements such as, vox est qualitas et aer est substantia, are suggestive of the mentalist approach to phonological theory which has been characteristic of certain linguistic 'schools' of today.

(4) William of Sherwood, Introductiones in Logicam: est autem sonus proprium sensibile aurium et dividitur sic. Sonus unus vox, alius non vox. Sonus vox est ut quod fit ab ore animalis. Sonus non vox et strepitus pedum, fragor arborum et similia. Vox sic dividitur: alia significativa, alia non significativa. Vox significativa est, quo aliquid significat, non significativa, que nil significat ut buba blictrix. Vox significativa quedam significat naturaliter, quedam ad placitum. Naturaliter, que natura agente aliquid significat ut gemitus infirmorum et similia. Ad placitum, que ex humana institutione significationem recipit. (Quoted by H. Roos, p.142).



the Stoic theory and of modern practice, i.e. the use of 'nonsense' words in phonetics (1).

The word, which must express a reality, is a sign (signum). Human intelligence indicates with the help of a word a particular reality, a definite 'ens' or thing; these words, which can be considered grammatical expressions, i.e. partes orationis, must, if they are to function realistically, be taken as correlatives of things in the world of reality (2). The 'word' can therefore be considered as

- (a) a physical sound produced by the vox,
- (b) a sign which expresses one or other reality and is therefore a dictio, and
- (c) as a particular word-class or grammatical category or pars orationis.

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(1) cf. R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.26; also J.R. Firth, The Techniques of Semantics, Papers in Linguistics, p.24.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #9: licet privationes non sint entia positiva extra animam, sunt tamen entia positiva in anima,..... et sunt entia secundum animam; et quia eorum intelligi est eorum esse, ideo eorum modi intelligendi erunt modi essendi. Unde nomina privationum, per suos modos significandi activos, non erunt consignificativa falsa, quia cum modi intelligendi privationum reducuntur ad modos intelligendi habitus (nam privatio non cognoscitur nisi per habitum), ideo modi essendi privationum tandem ad modos essendi habitus reducuntur.



Our faculty of understanding bestows on the sound a meaning, and thereby the vox becomes a dictio; but our understanding has another more positive function, i.e. to give to every word, to every dictio, a precise meaning, a 'geformte Bedeutung', and thereby assigns every word to a particular word-class; the dictio thus becomes a pars orationis. The intellect bestows upon the vox a double function; in the first place the vox acquires meaning (primary or referential meaning) as a result of which it becomes a dictio (1) and as such possesses a ratio significandi, i.e. the potential ability to signify (2). (Siger, however, attributes to the dictio the mode of designation (modus signandi), but this automatically implies the potential ability to signify).

This dictio not only has a significatio but also a consignificatio (3) which can best be described as syntactic meaning (or functional meaning) and as a result of this, the word is not only a signum but a consignum, and therefore it is not only a dictio but a pars orationis; in other words, the word can have not only a notional or semantic

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: intellectus vocem ad significandum, et consignificandum imponit, duplicem rationem tribuit, scilicet, rationem significandi, quae vocatur significatio, per quam efficitur signum vel significans; et sic formaliter est dictio.
  - 2) cf. 3.11, p. 76.
  - 3) cf. 3.11, p. 78-82.



meaning which will be linked to its essence and is thus its essential meaning, but also a syntactic meaning which enables it to function by means of a substantival or verbal or other meaning which will derive from its essence.

This leads to a very important feature of the Modistic grammatical system, i.e. that the individual word or *pars orationis* in isolation is grammatically powerless, and it is only its potentiality and its realisation to become the act of consignification (1), i.e. the ratio and modus consignificandi, which permits the word to function at a different, i.e. syntactic level. The difference in referential terms between substantivum and adiectivum, nomen and verbum, and between nomen and pronomen, etc. depend on the difference between their various modes of signifying, but they can be distinguished functionally, i.e. syntactically only by their consignification.

Consignification (consignificatio) is therefore the feature which functionally i.e. syntactically distinguishes those *partes orationis* which have the same primary or referential meaning (significatio), and this is thus the syntactic meaning of each word-class (2).

- 1) cf. 3.11, p.78-82 for a discussion of this technical term.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #4: *pars est pars secundum se per hanc rationem consignificandi, seu modum significandi activum, tanquam per principium formale ... sed est pars relata ad aliam per eandem rationem consignificandi activum, tanquam per principium efficiens intrinsecum, cf. the sections on syntax, 5.222 and 5.223 for the terms principium formale and efficiens.*



A second value to consignification, i.e. connotation, derives from the first usage of consignification since this difference is marked by the functional i.e. syntactic meaning as well as by the different essential modes of the partes orationis concerned.

When one investigates a grammatical expression, i.e. isolated words and their meaning, one must consider not only what they indicate but also how they indicate the object in question. It often happens that the same object will be indicated by means of different words since this object may possess several properties which require therefore several modes of signifying for their expression (1): the object is the same but the way of indicating it is different, e.g. 'dolor' and 'doleo' have the same primary meaning but the word 'doleo' has, in contrast to 'dolor', the consignification of the modus fluxus (2); every word signifies not only a definite reality but also possesses the consignification or connotation of a definite mode or property of being.

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #114: in una et eadem re possunt reperiri diversae proprietates rei non repugnantes, a quibus sumi possunt diversi modi significandi activi licet una vox non imponatur ei, ut stat sub omnibus illis proprietatibus, sed quandoque imponatur una vox, ut stat sub una proprietate, quandoque alia vox, ut stat sub alia proprietate.

(2) As was pointed out previously, p.80, Siger and Thomas do not use dolor/doleo or donum/datum at all when discussing consignification; these are terms quoted by Thurot (p.155-6) and Roos (p.143-4), though neither of them refer to a Modistic text to illustrate.



The matter is made more explicit if we consider the result when two different properties are signified and expressed by modes of <sup>f</sup>signifying and voces which belong to the same pars orationis; in such an instance the difference is one of 'species' since, as we shall see <sup>(1)</sup>, 'species' is derived from the property of the thing and not from its expression (vox), so that 'albedo' and 'albus' are different 'species' of the same nomen, i.e. expressions of different properties of the same thing, i.e. they both represent, by means of different modes of signifying <sup>(2)</sup>, the different aspects of the same modus entis. It may well happen, however, that the different properties of the same thing are signified by means of modes of signifying which represent different partes orationis, e.g. dolor/doleo, or albedo/dealbo <sup>(3)</sup>; by contrasting this with the two instances within the accidental mode of 'species' of the pars, we are able to see much more clearly the consignification involved. As dictiones, 'albedo/dealbo' possessed

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(1) cf. 5.11<sup>1</sup>2, p.253.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #114: haec res, albedo, habet diversas proprietates, sub quibus possunt ei imponi diversae voces. Nam si consideretur in ea modus entis, qui est modus habitus et permanentis, sic significatur per vocem nominis absolute. Si autem consideretur in ea modus entis, et cum hoc modus essentiae determinatae, sic significatur voce nominis substantivi, ut albedo. Si autem consideretur in ea modus entis et cum hoc modus inhaerentiae alteri secundum essentiam, sic significatur in voce nominis adiectivi, ut albus.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #114: si consideretur in ea modus esse, qui est modus fluxus et successionis et cum hoc modus essentiae distinctae, sic significatur verbaliter, ut dealbo. Item si consideretur in ea modus inhaerentis secundum esse, sic significatur participaliter, ut dealbans.



the same significatio, i.e. root meaning which might be crudely represented as  $\sqrt{*alb-}$ , but they also possessed different potentialities (rationes) of consignification. They possess therefore different essential modes of signifying, i.e. *modus entis et permanentis* in the case of 'albedo' and *modus esse et fluxus* in the case of 'dealbo'; since an active respective mode of signifying <sup>(1)</sup> implies an ability to consignify (*ratio consignificandi*), it follows that 'albedo' and 'dealbo' possess different consignifications because they signify different properties by means of modes of signifying which are essential to different *partes orationis*.

It follows from all this that the object of speculative grammar, i.e. the *modi significandi*, is to express ideas which are dependent on our understanding; this perhaps explains Roger Bacon's belief that there is only one grammar for all languages. It should be remembered

that for the *Modistae* at least, grammar meant a categorical semasiology; the investigation of isolated linguistic expressions, i.e. the *dictio* or the *pars orationis* per se, which differ in every language, do not belong in themselves to the affair of universal grammar.

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(1) cf. 4.243, p. 178.



4.11 Vox.

The Modistae make great use of 'vox' but not as an independent member of a linguistic system. In Modistic terminology, vox does not imply phonic, i.e. acoustic and motor criteria, indeed phonic material is excluded from their corpus (1); the purely phonic material is a matter for the physicist, not for the grammarian (2). In this the Modistae seem to have been in complete agreement. Michel de Marbais, for instance, denies any independent function to the vox because of its lack of signification or of any system of signifying (3); on the other hand (and herein may lie some explanation of the importance which the Modistae did nevertheless attach to vox), he insists on the role that vox (but it must be the vox significativa), plays in the creation of the dictio and the pars orationis.

Both Siger and Thomas treat the relationship between the vox and signum, and from the intimate nature of their association, it becomes clear that the vox may be a signum and a signum may be a vox; as for Thomas it is in fact this very closeness that gives a definite function to the

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- (1) It is true that John of Dacia does discuss vox at some length, but quite differently from Priscian and other 'literary' grammarians who were in so many instances the models used by the Modistae.
  - (2) G.L. Trager also suggests that phonetics may be pre-linguistic; cf. G.L. Trager. *The Field of Linguistics. Studies in Linguistic Analysis.*
  - (3) Michel de Marbais: vox, unde vox est, nullum in se includit significatum vel rationem significandi, nisi loquendo methaphorice.



vox in a grammatical system, because grammar deals with 'signa rerum' and a vox is the most suitable of all 'signa'. It is because the vox belongs to the signum that the grammarian considers vox at all, but even so he does this 'per accidens'.

Siger is perhaps a little more positive than Thomas in attributing a positive function to the vox; it is true that he is content with Priscian's definition of vox <sup>(1)</sup> but at the same time he does attach to the vox a more meaningful function <sup>(2)</sup>, and it thereby becomes a dictio; furthermore, by the addition of the modus significandi activus, it becomes a pars orationis. Thus the vox, by means of the modus signandi, signifies, i.e. designates, the thing and by means of the modus significandi, it signifies the properties of the thing, as a result of which it can become grammatically operable. The vox has thus a double function <sup>(3)</sup>; firstly, the result of the intellect's combining the vox with the modus signandi is the dictio, and secondly, the intellect's combining the vox with the modus significandi results in the pars orationis. The vox

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(1) cf. p. 118 .

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: vox ... est vox ex actu proferendi.

(3) Martin of Dacia, Tractatus de modis significandi: vox significat rem et consignificat proprietates rei.



is thus a material form of realisation, but a contingent one (1).

The vox then has no power of its own to signify; this alone would account for the speed with which the Modistae pass over all consideration of vox. The vox and the modus significandi have the power to signify the thing, but the vox and the modus significandi activus have the power to signify the modus essendi or the property of the thing (2); vox is thus an integral part of the pars orationis. We might therefore say that the modus significandi represents the thought symbolism, but that the vox is required to give it linguistic symbolism. This is in fact suggested by Siger who tells us that the modus significandi activus is a concept of the mind (conceptus intellectus) and as such will always remain in the mind; the modus significandi and the vox must remain discrete, although the expression of the modus significandi will be by means of the vox (3). This, however serves to stress the secondary, or we might even call it the 'inferior', nature of vox in the eyes of the Modistae, since nothing can be signified by the vox unless it has first been conceived by the intellect. The whole theory of the modus

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #19: vox est habilissimum signum inter alia signa, ideo vox inquantum signum prius consideratur a grammatico, quam alia signa rerum. Sed quia esse signum accidit voci, ideo grammaticus considerans vocem, considerat per accidens.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: vox, mediante modo significandi, significat ipsam rem sic, mediante modo significandi activo significat modum essendi seu proprietatem rei.
- (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.94-5: conceptus intellectus manent in intellectu et sunt in eo et non transeunt extra, tamen voces denominant et per eas invicem construuntur sicut universale existens in intellectu denominat rem extra.



significandi is based on the understanding of the thing and its properties, but it is the *modus significandi*, not the *vox*, which is the formulation of this concept of the mind.

Another reason for the dismissal by the Modistae of *vox* as a vital active element in grammar is that the Modistae are not at all concerned with the difference in the expression planes of various languages. Indeed the Modistae were not concerned at all with other languages or for that matter with any particular language, but with a theory of grammar, which, rightly or wrongly, they considered to be universal, i.e. a form of metagrammar.

So far our consideration of *vox* has dealt almost entirely with its phonetic aspect, but if we consider *vox* from a linguistic <sup>(1)</sup> point of view, we shall find that *vox* is a much more vital part of the Modistic system than a superficial examination of their work implies or than is stated overtly in their writings.

It is quite clear that the Modistae quite deliberately excluded all physiological-acoustic considerations of *vox*, but can we also say that *vox* has no phonological function? This can perhaps be stated more positively, i.e. what is the linguistic function of *vox* in the creation of a *dictio* and a *pars orationis*, and does its activity cease at that

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(1) The term 'linguistic' is here used in the same sense as Professor Mjølmslev uses it, cf. Prolegomena, p.50.



point? We cannot dismiss vox as a purely incidental feature of their system, even if it appears to be so as a result of their descriptions of vox (1), because it is the constant feature which is found among the features constituting a dictio and a pars orationis, although this must not be taken to suggest that phonetics plays any part at all in their descriptive or grammatical system (2). It seems possible, therefore, to argue that, even though vox is of no consideration in so far as impressionistic and acoustic values are concerned, it does become a more positive feature at a phonological (3) level. It may not and does not imply phonic criteria, but it must, however, remain on the level of repression, and will refer to "la réalisation de l'image intérieure dans le discours" (4). But vox is not merely just a device for a look outside the intellectual confines of the modus significandi.

We have stressed that the Modistae denied "vox unde vox" to be a matter for the grammarian; but "vox unde signum"

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(1) cf. 4.11.

(2) cf. p. 117-19

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.133: Volumus facere sermonem de toto aggregato ex voce significato et modo significandi et non possumus nisi per vocem, ideo necesse fuit huic aggregato imponere vocem aliquam ad significandum totum aggregatum sub modis significandi qui dicti sunt.

(4) F. de Saussure, Cours de Linguistique générale, p.98.



does have a functional yield in the Modistic grammatical system (although they never say with any preciseness just what it is)<sup>(1)</sup>. Trubetzkoy suggested that phonetics was almost outside the province of the linguist <sup>(2)</sup> and differentiated between "les sons de la parole", i.e. phonetics and "les sons de la langue", i.e. phonology <sup>(3)</sup>: we can perhaps equate "les sons de la parole" to "vox unde vox". Trubetzkoy also insisted on the functional and meaningful nature of phonology <sup>(4)</sup>; the Modistae clearly never envisaged 'vox' in such terms, but vox did become, (and this almost despite the Modistae themselves), a constant feature, i.e. the expression or manifestation of the changes of meaning, made by means of the inter-change of the various modes of signifying.

#### 4.12. Signum.

It seems safe to say that the vox significativa <sup>(5)</sup> was not conceived of as something which might be the

(1) cf. pp. 109 .

(2) N.S. Troubetzkoy, Principles de phonologie, p. 10-12.

(3) N.S. Troubetzkoy, Op.cit., p.10.

(4) N.S. Troubetzkoy, Op.cit., pp.11-12: la phonologie doit rechercher quelles différences phoniques sont liées, dans la langue étudiée, à des différences de signification, comment les éléments de différenciation se comportent entre eux et selon quelles règles ils peuvent se combiner les uns avec les autres pour former des mots et des phrases.

(5) It might be possible to describe the 'vox articulata' as the equivalent of the phoneme, but this is not at all pertinent to this study, since none of the Modistae studied (with the exception of John of Dacia) make any use of this term or of the term 'litera'.



equivalent of the phoneme of today; 'vox unde vox' is used really to indicate the articulation or the vocal expression of a mental concept. The Modistae appear to have sensed, almost intuitively, the relationship between the concept (conceptus intellectus) and its expression or, to be more exact, its signification (significatio), which is the function of the signum. The term 'intuitively' is used quite deliberately, for although all the Modistae seem to have used the term, they do not seem to have done so specifically, and certainly not with any definition attached to it; we have, therefore, to try to deduce its function. Indeed, much of the deduction about the nature of the signum depends on one's interpretation of 'vox'; as was stated in the previous section (1), 'vox unde vox' is not, according to the Modistae, a matter for the linguist, but 'vox unde signum' is. Siger tells us (2) that voces are the signs of the passionēs, i.e. affections of the mind (3), and that grammar deals (4), inter alia, with the sentence (sermo) and its various occurrences. Similarly, Thomas tells us (5) that vox is considered by

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- 1) cf. p. 109.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p. 94: voces sunt signa passionum.
  - 3) There is no connection between this use of 'passio', and the use of 'passio' as a contrast to 'actio'.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p. 93: grammatica est sermonacinalis scientia, sermonem et passionēs eius in communi ad exprimendum principaliter mentis conceptus per sermonem coniugatum considerans.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt #19: vox, in quantum vox, non consideratur a grammatico, sed in quantum signum, quia grammatica est de signis rerum.



the grammarian only insofar as it is a signum, since grammar deals with the signs of things. Therefore, by reason of this, vox can be considered as a part of Modistic sign theory.

Martin of Dacia describes a signum as something which has the ability to signify <sup>(1)</sup>. He sees the relationship between the signum and the dictio thus: they are alike in that they both possess the ability to signify <sup>(2)</sup>, but differ 'ex parte substantie'. He has furthermore seen that the signum is a much broader concept than the dictio, inasmuch that any dictio will be a signum, since it must refer to something, but not every signum will necessarily be a dictio, <sup>(3)</sup>. This points to the fact that 'signum' is a super-class, and that a dictio, as a member of this class, is really nothing more than a signum manifested in vox.

Thomas makes a somewhat similar distinction between signum and dictio; he too does not attempt to define signum. The distinction between signum and dictio is that the latter, in addition to the ability to designate <sup>(4)</sup> makes use of

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(1) Martin of Dacia: quod habet rationem aliquid significandi.

(2) Martin of Dacia: signum et dictio non differunt ex parte eius quod significant, sed ex parte substantie utriusque.

(3) Martin of Dacia: signum potest dici de nuptu cordis et de voce et de aliis; dictio autem de voce tantum.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #18: dicitur dictio formaliter per rationem signandi voci superadditam, quia dictio est vox significativa.



vox significativa, which produces a term capable of signifying.

#### 4.13 Dictio.

Peter Helias followed Priscian's definition of the dictio as the minimal pars orationis which can be constructed in a sequence <sup>(1)</sup>; every dictio is therefore a pars orationis, but it should not be imagined that every dictio will be the same pars orationis, for, as Peter points out, Priscian did not mean that the dictio would be any particular pars orationis, e.g. nomen, but just any para <sup>(2)</sup>. (Peter adds that it is the modus significandi which serves to distinguish one pars from another - but then the dictio qua dictio does not have a modus significandi).

For the Modistae, the dictio was something more than a mere vocal noise. The dictio, according to Michel de Marbais, possesses, as its substantial element, vox, and acquires the ratio significandi as its form <sup>(3)</sup>; this term 'ratio significandi' has been considered <sup>(4)</sup> elsewhere, and it seems that it refers to the potentiality or ability to signify. It is linked, however, to the thing which is

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(1) Peter Helias: dictio est minima pars orationis constructa in ordine.

(2) Peter Helias: dictio est pars orationis, pars integralis intelligitur, non quod dictio aliqua sit hec pars orationis nomen vel alia.

(3) Michel de Marbais: dictio, unde dictio est, includit in se vocem tanquam sibi materiam et rationem significandi tanquam sibi formam (Thurot, p. 156 .)

(4) cf. p. 74.



to be signified by means of the *modus intelligendi*. The *dictio* is therefore a creature of the intellect, which is, so to speak, preparing to bestow signification on the thing under consideration, i.e. the thing has been marked by the *vox* as being capable of being signified <sup>(1)</sup>. *Dictio* is therefore a combination of *vox* (which will be its expression) and of *ratio significandi*, which marks it off as a special kind of '*signum*' sence every *dictio* will be a *signum*, though not every *signum* will be a *dictio* - a *dictio* is thus a sub-class of '*signum*' <sup>(2)</sup>. There is here what appears to be a minor divergence between Siger on the one hand and Thomas, Michel, etc. on the other. Siger tells us <sup>(3)</sup> <sup>a</sup>thst the *modus signandi* is the means by which the intellect uses the *vox* to designate the thing <sup>(4)</sup> - there is no question of any meaning being introduced, but it is by means of the '*ratio signandi*' that the *vox* becomes a *dictio*. It would seem, therefore, that for Siger the *dictio* is still

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(1) Michel de Marbais: *dictio est vox rei significativa mediante ratione significandi ab intellectu sibi concessa.*

(2) Martin of Dacia, *signum in plus se habet quam dictio, quia omnis dictio potest dici de nuptu cordis et de voce et de aliis, dictio autem de voce tantum.*

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: *per rationem signandi vox formaliter dici-tur dictio.*

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p.130: *ratio signandi apud intellectum existens est illud mediante quo vox signat rem.*



pre-grammatical. On the other hand, it may just be a matter of terminological variation between the ratio signandi of Siger and the ratio significandi of Thomas and Michel. It would in fact seem that Siger includes the ratio signandi as an additional stage in the process, i.e. the vox has the potentiality of designating and thus becomes a dictio which in turn possesses the potential ability to signify.

If dictio is the vox significativa, as Thomas states<sup>(1)</sup>, then we have a state of affairs much closer to the Saussurean theory of the 'signe linguistique' than was the case with the signum<sup>(2)</sup>. The signum can represent anything<sup>(3)</sup> but will not become a dictio until vox significativa and the potentiality of signifying (ratio significandi) have been added; therefore a dictio is a combination of the vox and the primary (or potential) signification, i.e. expression and content.

It is difficult to find something in modern linguistic theory which can really be compared to the dictio: Gray's definition, "the smallest thought unit vocally expressible"<sup>(4)</sup>

(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #18: dictio est vox significativa.

(2) It seems almost feasible to say that the Modistae might have served themselves better if they had dropped all consideration of 'signum'.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #18: dicitur signum per rationem signandi, vel repraesentandi aliquid absolute.

(4) L.H. Gray, Foundations of Language. p.146.



comes very close, but we must not be beguiled by the common etymology of 'vox' and 'vocally'. It is of course not really correct to speak of 'word' in reference to 'dictio', since 'word' as a technical term implies a meaning and an utterance which dictio does not have.

#### 4.14. Pars orationis.

The pars orationis is a grammatical expression, and can be considered the correlative of things or 'entia rationis' in the world of reality (1); the mediaeval grammarians argued that anything or any being which the intelligence can grasp can also be indicated by language. The metaphysicians observe in beings two primordial elements - stability and becoming; their expression is the object of study by the grammarian. The parts of speech which are to indicate the stable, the permanence of things, are the nouns and pronouns; becoming is expressed by the verb and participle; the other parts of speech act in concert with the declinable parts of speech, but their signification will be rather different.

It is not enough for the word to signify - it must also consignify (2); the word must possess both these

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.93: rerum proprietatibus partes orationis invicem distinguuntur.

(2) cf. 3.11, p. 78-82, and 4.1, p. 120-24, where this technical term is discussed in much greater detail.



attributes before it can become a grammatical element. The dictio possesses only the potential ability to signify, the pars possesses both the potentiality (ratio) and the modes of signifying and consignifying; in other words, it signifies the things by means of the mode of signifying which can be thought of in this context as a 'blanket' term, and the properties of the thing by means of the different modes of signifying which correlate to these different properties (1). Siger illustrates by the analogy of the red cloth outside the inn: the cloth indicates the wine, but 'red' indicates the redness of the wine (2).

The mind makes use of the vox both to signify and to consignify; the dictio has the power potentially to signify by virtue of the ability to signify (ratio significandi); it becomes a pars orationis by the addition of the modus significandi activus (3), so that it realises its potential ability as a dictio to signify and by virtue of the potential ability to consignify (ratio consignificandi) it acquires its character of 'consignum' (4) which is its particular method of referring to the thing involved.

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: vox, mediante modo significandi, significat ipsam rem, sic, mediante modo significandi activo significat modum essendi seu proprietatem rei.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: sicut pannus rubeus pendens ante tabernam; unde pannus significat vinum, unde rubeus, rubedinem vini
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #18: pars orationis formaliter est per modum significandi activum, dictioni superadditum, quia pars orationis est dictio, ut habet modum significandi activum.
  - 4) This term should be considered in conjunction with consignificatio (cf.3.11) if vox as a signum becomes a dictio by reason of its potential ability to signify, as a 'consignum' it becomes a pars orationis by reason of its potential ability to consignify.



The pars orationis is thus a creature<sup>e</sup> of three elements, the vox, dictio and consignificatio (1). The pars orationis has its status by virtue of the modus significandi but in order to become a pars<sup>o</sup>rationis it really requires a mode of consignifying (modus consignificandi) (2) which will consist of primary meaning and class-meaning (3), and also the thing and its properties and the vox by means of which the thing will be signified. We have thus completed the full logical progression, in which one term presupposes the preceeding term, though the contrary is not the case; we end up with a pars orationis which is capable not only of signifying, but by virtue of its consignification of functioning syntactically (4).

All the partes orationis, whether declinable or indeclinable, have two essential modes of signifying, i.e. the general and the special (at least in Siger's system), and by means of these sub-modes, the essence of each pars can be integrated into the system, for all the partes

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- (1) Michel de Marbais: pars est vox significativa ~~sum~~ proprietatibus suis mediante ratione significandi et consignificandi ab intellectu sibi concessa.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: modus consignificandi per quem pars est pars, praesupponit rationem significandi, vocem et significatum.
- (3) cf. p. 121 .
- (4) cf. p. 120-1 .



orationis are in fact distinguished by means of the properties of the things, i.e. the essence, they represent (1). It is difficult to see how the indeclinable partes can possess any essence in the sense that the declinable partes express either 'ens' or 'esse', i.e. being or becoming. Siger in fact tries to side-step this issue by saying that such partes do not partake of the essence of language (2).

The pars orationis is, therefore, made up, in Siger's scheme, of (a) the general mode of signifying which is derived from the essence of more than one pars orationis, e.g. substantia which belongs to the essence of both the nomen and the pronomen, and (b) the specific or special mode of signifying which is added to the general mode to complete the species of the pars orationis (3), but also serves to distinguish or particularise one pars orationis from another (4): this is particularly true of the indeclinable partes, all of which, in Siger's scheme, have

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.93: non aliter possunt distingui partes orationis a se nisi uniuscuiusque proprietates significationum attendamus.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.144: sunt magis de bene esse orationis quam de esse. cf. also R.H. Robins, A. & M. p.85.
- (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: modus significandi specificus est modus significandi qui additus modo significandi generali constituit speciem.
- (4) Siger de Courtrai, p.145: specificus qui est sicut differentia specifica in diffinitione speciei logicalis distinguens illam partem ab omnibus aliis speciebus.



the same *modus significandi essentialis generalis*, i.e. the mode of disposition (*modus disponentis*).<sup>(1)</sup>

It has been pointed out several times <sup>(2)</sup> that there is little, if any, disagreement between the Modistae on matters of grammatical doctrine, though their organisation and presentation is often at variance: we have an excellent example of this in the difference in organisation of the essential modes of the *partes orationis*, particularly of the declinable *partes* - (their presentation of the indeclinable *partes* tends to be even more at variance). In

contrast to Siger, Thomas presents the essence of each *pars* in the form of the *modus generalissimus* which contains, to all intents and purposes, the same doctrine as Siger's, but Thomas is not concerned with the general/specific contrast which is so characteristic of Siger's presentation. Thomas is, however, as concerned as Siger in demonstrating the similarities and differences between the *partes orationis*, and to do this, Thomas makes use of the matter/form contrast.<sup>(3)</sup> The *pars orationis*, therefore, is made up, in Thomas's scheme, of a *modus generalissimus* which states the essence of the *pars* (and contains the same content as Siger's general and specific modes), and the *modus subalternus* and the *modus specialissimus* (which are absent from Siger's work), which describe and individualise the various members of the word-class in question.

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(1) cf. pp. 445-6.

(2) cf. p. 146: 215: 221: 227, 602-9.

(3) cf. p. 746.



The similarity of the *modus generalis* leads one to suggest that Siger, unlike Thomas, had in mind a three-rank system of the *partes orationis* made up from the three features which constitute the essence of the eight *partes-orationis*, i.e. (i) *modus entis* for the *nomen/pronomen*, (ii) *modus esse* for the *verbum/participium*, and (iii) *modus disponentis* for the indeclinable *partes*. This arrangement of the general mode of signifying has suggested the idea of establishing a system of 'archipartes', which, though obviously based on entirely different criteria, would be curiously reminiscent of the Prague theory of the 'archiphoneme' (1) and of the 'archimorpheme' as proposed by Saporta (2).

There is also a very definite hierarchy in the system of *partes orationis*, which is structured in terms of the essence of the *partes orationis*; we have therefore a clear-cut division (which happens to coincide with the division between the declinable and the indeclinable *partes*), between those *partes* which have a definite metaphysical essence and those which have only a grammatical essence. Thomas has nothing specific to say on this point, but by implication he does deny the possession of essence, i.e. metaphysical essence, by the indeclinable *partes*; in the

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- (1) N.S. Troubetzkoy, Principes de phonologie, p.81.  
 A. Martinet, Neutralisation et archiphonème, TCLP VI, p.46  
 A. Martinet, La description phonologique, p.42.  
 (2) Sol Saporta, Morph, Morphème, Archimorphème, Word 12, pp. 9-14.



essential modes of the declinable partes, his definition can be split up into the material and formal elements, the material element referring to the essence of the pars and the formal element to the distinctive features of the essence of the pars, e.g. in the verb, the material element, i.e. its essence, is the modus esse and its formal element, i.e. its distinctive element is 'distantia', its separation from the suppositum (1). In the indeclinable partes, Thomas no longer uses two-part definitions but describes the essential mode in syntactic terms which are equivalent to Siger's specific mode, i.e. he no longer makes use of a 'material' essential element but relies entirely on the formal element to define the pars in question (2) - true he continues to use the term 'essentialis' but it seems that this is more for the sake of symmetry of descriptive terminology rather than an attempt to attach a metaphysical origin to something which he obviously considers, by virtue of his definition, to be a grammatical feature. Siger is more insistent and consistent in attributing a grammatical essence to the indeclinable partes, so that every

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #110: modus significandi generalissimus essentialis verbi est modus significandi rem per modum esse, et distantis a substantis. cf. 5.112 for a detailed discussion of the verb, and 3.13 for a discussion of the term 'suppositum'.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #170: modus significandi essentialis coniunctionis generalissimus est modus significandi per modum coniungentis.



indeclinable pars possesses the essential modes of general, i.e. modus disponentis, and specific (1). (It might be possible to argue that Siger's system of dividing the essential mode into general and specific created the need for the grammatical essence of the indeclinable partes in order to preserve the symmetry of his descriptive procedure). Siger never suggested that the indeclinable partes possessed an essence in the sense that the declinable partes do; his argument is that in every species there is a general and specific, the general being used to express those features which overlap and are also possessed by other species while the specific serves to distinguish this particular species from all other species (2). Similarly, an indeclinable pars has, therefore, the grammatical essence of syntactic relationship with other partes, and this, its general mode, it shares with the other indeclinable partes alike, but it has also the specific mode of having a particular type of syntactic relationship which distinguishes it from all the other partes orationis both declinable and

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.152: generalis est significare per modum disponentis .. specialis est significare per modum efficientis animam. This is his definition of the essential mode of the Interjection.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.145: in speciebus consideratis a grammatico, videlicet in speciebus partium orationis, decuntur poni in diffinitionibus illarum specierum duo modi significandi essentielles integrantes essentiam illius speciei, quorum <sup>unus</sup> est generalis quia in alia specie partis reperitur et similiter in omnibus illius partis, et alius specificus qui est sicut differentia specifica in diffinitione speciei logicalis distinguens illam partem ab omnibus aliis speciebus.



indeclinable (1).

The highest places in the hierarchy are filled by those partes which express 'ens' or 'esse' in their general modes of signifying; these are the nomen and pronomen, verbum and participium, which are collectively referred to as 'magis principales'. These partes orationis will have many more modi significandi than the indeclinable partes, since possessing more than grammatical essence, i.e. metaphysical essence, will mean that 'accidents' will happen to this essence, which must be expressed by means of modi significandi. The minor or indeclinable partes cannot obviously possess the same number of modes of signifying, since their lack of metaphysical essence might presumably deprive them of any accidental mode of signifying (2). Thomas does ascribe certain accidental modes to the indeclinable partes, but these are either absolute modes, elsewhere described as modes representing 'derivation' (3), and therefore without any syntactic function, or modes, e.g. ordo in the conjunction (4), which refer to the

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(1) cf. 5.1211, 5.1221, 5.1231 and 5.1241, where the use of modus generalis and specificus is discussed and illustrated in more detail and with particular reference to the different indeclinable partes orationis.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.144: aliae partes orationis sunt minus principales quia modi significandi ipsarum sumuntur a proprietatibus minus principalibus et sunt indeclinabiles quia carent illis accidentibus penes quae attenditur declinatio.

(3) p. 246.

(4) cf. 5.1222.



syntactic meaning, i.e. function of the pars in question (1). It is interesting to note that 'comparatio', which Thomas included as a *modus significandi essentialis specialissimus* of the nomen but which Siger has included as an accidental mode of the nomen (2), becomes an accidental mode of the adverb (3) in Thomas's account. The individual pars orationis will be considered major or minor according to whether its modes of signifying are derived from properties which are themselves considered major or minor, i.e. whether they express 'ens/esse' or not.

#### 4.2 Categories.

Mediaeval Sprachlogik rests on the following divisions:

- (i) mode of signifying (*modus significandi*),
- (ii) mode of understanding (*modus intelligendi*),
- (iii) mode of being (*modus essendi*); the different logical and grammatical modes of signification are postulated from our intellectual experience (*modus intelligendi*) which in turn delineate the different categories and properties of reality (*modus essendi*). Grammar viewed in this light, does it not become a part of logic? The Modistae said not. Logic for them is concerned with truth or untruth,

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(1) cf. 3.11

(2) cf. 5.1111.

(3) cf. 5.121.



grammar with correct or incorrect expression.<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, according to Martin of Dacia, the task of the grammarian is to investigate the principles of his science, the principles of grammar being the modes of signification.

The *modus essendi* is the thing itself with its various properties, which is of no direct concern to the linguist, since he is not concerned with the thing, i.e. the referent. The thing is perceived by the mind - in Modistic terminology this stage is the *modus intelligendi*. So far, however, linguistic factors have not been introduced.

The grammarian must express in language his understanding of the reality he is considering; this he does by means of the mode of signifying (*modus significandi*), though to be quite true, it is not until we come to the active mode of signifying that the grammarian really begins to use language as his tool, his mode of expression. Just as a thing has many properties, so a *pars orationis* will have many modes of signifying, each with the task of signifying some aspect or property of the thing in question, i.e. its essential mode will describe its essence, its accidental mode will describe <sup>(2)</sup> the variations which

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.135: *logica defendit animam nostram a falso in speculativis et a malo in practicis, sic grammatica defendit virtutem nostram interpretativam ab expressione conceptus mentis incongrua in omnibus scientiis. Nevertheless, we should remember that the Modistae were logicians as well as grammarians which is quite clearly evident in their grammatical writings.*

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.131: *modus significandi accidentalis est qui advenit parti post suum completum esse, sicut accidentia dicuntur accidentia quia adveniunt rei secundum suum completum esse.*



will occur to its essence and thus permit the pars to function at a higher, i.e. syntactical, level by virtue of the external variations in its essence. The grammarian's concern is with these various modes of signifying.

The *modus significandi* is divided into the active and the passive modes; the grammarian has no concern with the passive mode of signifying, and, as has been stated (1), begins to work only with the active mode of signifying, its dimensions of essential and accidental, absolute and respective, and their sub-divisions of general and special modes of signifying, etc. Thereafter the eight *partes orationis* are described in turn, in terms of these different modes of signifying; the essential modes are always described first, since the grammatical function of each pars is established by virtue of its essence, whereas the accidental modes are really variations of the essence of the pars and do not influence the original mode of signification.

#### 4.21 Modus essendi (2)

This is, strictly speaking, not a linguistic category at all but a philosophical one. Things possess properties, which, Siger tells us, serve to distinguish the *partes*

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(1) cf. p. 116.

(2) cf. Appendix B.



orationis <sup>(1)</sup>; in themselves, they exist outside the mind and therefore outside the linguistic system <sup>(2)</sup>. Just as cause precedes effect, so the *modus essendi*, which represents the properties of these things, precedes the *modus intelligendi* which is the manner in which the mind perceives and understands these things.

Although the *modus essendi* is in itself not a grammatical category, it has a close relationship to all the accidental modes of signifying and will exercise a particular influence on the nature and function of certain of these accidental modes, e.g. the species *primitiva* of the nomen; Siger suggests that this grammatical <sup>(3)</sup> category serves to designate the *modus essendi* of the thing in its stark pristine state <sup>(4)</sup>, a statement which Thomas echoes <sup>(5)</sup>, and the latter goes so far as to exclude the *vox* from the

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.93: *rerum proprietatibus partes orationis invicem distinguuntur.*

(2) The views of the Modistae on language, as a mirror of reality were no doubt influenced by their attitude to the 'nominalist-realist' controversy of the day. Compare however, the ideas of Kant and Whorf in particular on this subject.

(3) The closeness between the *modus essendi* and the accidental mode has interesting syntactic implications in Modistic theory; species is, by its nature, an absolute mode, and can therefore not possess any syntactic function. Expressed in modern terms, the 'species' refers to the morphology of the nomen without having any morpho-syntactic function.

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: *designans modum essendi ut est primus et formalis et non ab alio descendens.*

(5) Thomas of Erfurt, #67: *species sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est modus existendi primarie (i.e. absolute).*



species (1) which is derived directly from the property of the thing. Similarly the various other accidental modes of the principal partes are so conceived as to express accidents of the *modus essendi* or the properties of the essence of the thing under consideration. It is note-worthy that Siger, for instance, makes no mention of the modes of being of the 'partes minus principales'; this immediately calls to mind Aristotle's theory of grammatical words (2), and also Tesnière's theory of 'mots pleins' and 'mots vides' (3). It should not be imagined, that each thing will have only one *modus essendi*: a thing can have many properties and therefore modes of being, which can mean, among other things, that one and the same thing can be of one or another gender (4).

- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #67: species..non attenditur ex parte vocis, ut quidam dicunt, ita quod illud nomen sit primitivae speciei, cuius vox est primo ad significandum imposita.
- (2) cf. R.H.Robins, A. & M., p.19-20: 85.
- (3) L. Tesnière, Esquisse d'une syntaxe structurale, p.7: il existe deux espèces de mots, les mots pleins, qui expriment une idée (fonction sémantique), et les mots vides, qui n'expriment par eux-mêmes aucune idée, mais servent seulement d'outils grammaticaux.
- (4) Siger de Courtrai, p.101 eadem res bene potest habere plures modos essendi seu plures proprietates eo quod modi essendi seu proprietates accedunt rebus et unius rei bene sunt plura accidentia propria; propter quod una et eadem res, sub alio et alio modo essendi designata, bene potest esse alterius et alterius generis. This reinforces the conviction that we are in fact dealing with modes and sub-modes of being; the *modus significandi* refers to the *modus essendi*, i.e. das Ding an sich, whereas the *modus significandi*, and its sub-dimensions and subdivisions refer to the properties, i.e. sub-modes of the thing.



The modus essendi is the property of the thing considered absolutely <sup>(1)</sup>, i.e. without any further consideration of anything except as it is in itself. The modus essendi refers just to the essence of the thing whereas the other modes introduce other considerations, and thereby establish other levels, which are without the absolute essence of being, i.e. the mode of understanding introduces the factor of 'intellectus' and the mode of signifying the factors of vox and signification. It is this matter of external factors which produces the 'formal' difference, because at the material level they are all considering the same thing; it is the addition of the ratio intelligendi and the ratio significandi and consignificandi, both of which are factors at the mental level, which creates the 'formal' element of difference.

The modi essendi, intelligendi <sup>5</sup>passivus and significandi passivus are the same materially (materialiter) but differ formally (formaliter) <sup>(2)</sup>; the modus essendi refers

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶12*: modus essendi est rei proprietates absolute.

(2) Modistic use of 'formaliter' is the same as mediaeval scholastic usage; it should not be thought of in the same sense as modern linguistic usage. Modistic use of terms such as 'materialiter' and 'formaliter' stem from their philosophical background which has already been described (Chapter II) as a modified realism or conceptualism, and can be looked upon as the equivalent of Abelard's theory. It may well be that Siger is more of a 'realist' than Thomas, e.g. he describes the possession of properties as the criterion for the pars orationis, whereas for Thomas, it is the modus significandi activus which is his criterion.



to the property of the thing absolutely, whereas the passive mode of understanding refers to this same property as understood by the mind <sup>(1)</sup> and the passive mode of signifying to the same property as signified by the vox <sup>(2)</sup>. Grammar operates by virtue of the meaning involved; everything has meaning, but to have meaning, there must first be something in existence. Every material thing possesses form and matter which is capable of being understood and of being designated and signified.

The modus essendi, the modi intelligendi activus and significandi activus differ both 'materialiter' and 'formaliter'. There cannot however be a direct link between the modus essendi and the modus significandi activus, since the property of the thing, which is its modus essendi, has to be perceived and understood, which is done at the level of the modus intelligendi, before it can be expressed by the modus significandi. Any other property of the thing in question, even if it is not to be understood and then expressed, will nonetheless belong to the modus essendi of the thing (but this is essentially static) <sup>(3)</sup>.

(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #12: ipsa proprietas rei, prout ab intellectu apprehensa.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #12: eiusdem rei proprietas, prout per vocem significatur.

(3) Martin of Dacia: omnes proprietates ipsius rei extra ~~intellectum~~ existentes dicuntur modi essendi.  
intellectum



The modi essendi, intelligendi passivus and significandi passivus, although they differ formally (formaliter), possess the same material properties, but when we move onto the active level, they differ materially (materialiter) as well. In the case of the active mode of understanding, the 'ratio intelligendi', i.e. the ability to understand, which is a property of the intellect <sup>(1)</sup>, has come into operation, but once the mind has perceived a thing, we move from an active mode to a passive state of the thing having been perceived by the mind - this is of course a philosophical rather than a linguistic matter. Similarly, at the level of the active mode of signifying, it is the ratio consignificandi, i.e. the ability to signify, according to Thomas <sup>(2)</sup>, a property of the vox which makes the difference.

#### 4.22 Modus intelligendi.

The next level is that of the mode of understanding (modus intelligendi) which follows the level of being just as the perception and understanding of the thing follow the thing itself. The mind now perceives and understands the thing and its qualities <sup>(3)</sup>.

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #13: modus intelligendi activus dicit proprietatem intellectus, quae est ratio intelligendi, sive concipiendi.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #13: modus significandi activus dicit proprietatem vocis, quae est ratio consignificandi.

(3) Martin of Dacia: modus intelligendi est proprietas rei secundum quod res est in intellectu et ut rerum eedem proprietates cum se sunt cointellecte.



This too is a philosophical stage and of little intrinsic interest to the linguist. Now that we have left the level of crude being, we begin to operate in terms of active and passive modes. The mind has to be in the active mode in order to perceive and apprehend: the mind can only apprehend the properties, i.e. the *modus essendi* of the thing which is to be signified. The mind cannot itself signify, and so it is the passive mode of understanding which becomes the vital link between understanding and signifying, and the modes of signifying are derived from the *modi essendi* as they have been understood by the mind (1).

The *modus intelligendi* is divided into the active and passive modes. The active and passive modes of understanding agree formally but differ materially; the act of understanding remains the same, and because of this, there is no formal difference between the active and passive modes. The form is "the principle of source (2) of the characteristic qualities, activity and behaviour of a substance" (3), in this case the act of understanding is the source of the qualities of both the active and passive modes of understanding. Similarly, "first matter does not and cannot exist by itself; it cannot as such be seen;

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, # 11: *modi significandi activi sumuntur a modis essendi, mediantibus modis intelligendi passivis; et ideo immediate modi significandi a modis intelligendi passivis sumuntur.*

(2) my italics.

(3) F.C. Copleston, Op.cit., p.88.



but its presence as a component metaphysical factor incorporeal substances is manifested by substantial change" (1); in the case of the modes of understanding, the substantial change which distinguishes materially the passive from the active modes, is that the passive mode tells us the property of the thing which has been passively understood, while the active mode tells us the attribute of the mind which is the action of understanding the property of the thing.

We find an interesting sequence in this system of applied semantics. The thing exists absolutely; it is apprehended by the mind which is an action of the mind, and the process could very possibly cease there, and the perception would pass into a state of having been perceived: the intellect, which is not the same as the mode of understanding (*modus intelligendi*) has the power of conferring expression on this passive state of perception. This activates it and brings the sequence up to the level of expression, which is active, but once having been expressed, that too passes into a passive state.

#### 4.221 Modus intelligendi activus (2).

This is the mode by means of which the intellect comprehends the *modus essendi* or the property of the thing

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(1) F.C. Copleston, Op.cit., p.88.

(2) cf. Appendix B.



under consideration (1), but as Thomas suggests by implication, we are not yet at the grammatical level, inasmuch that no expressive element, i.e. vox has been added.

The mind apprehends the property, i.e. modus essendi (2) of the thing, and it is by means of this that the intellect can signify and comprehend the properties of the thing (3).

It is now potentially signifiabile - it must be stressed that it is only potentially signifiabile, since at this level the intellect can append signification or it can merely conceive and comprehend. The act of conceiving is still a pre-grammatical level; it is a statement about the property of understanding.

The modus essendi, the modus intelligendi activus and the modus significandi activus do not agree formally or materially, and so we find ourselves, so to speak, mid-way between the thing itself devoid of any further attribute and the act of expressing the thing meaningfully, which is the grammatical level.

(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #13: modus intelligendi activus dicit proprietatem intellectus, quae est ratio intelligendi, sive concipiendi.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: intellectus comprehendit modum essendi seu proprietatem ipsius rei.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #10: intellectus rei proprietatem significat, concipit vel apprehendit.



The formal difference, as Copleston points out, is a matter of the 'source of the characteristic qualities' (1); in the case of the active mode, the difference stems from the fact that we are dealing with the acts of being, understanding and signifying. The material difference is that of substantial change, and in this instance it is the difference of level, i.e. the factors of essence, intellectus and vox which produce the material difference. It should be stressed that the substance will always remain the same, since "it is only of the substance that we can properly say that it exists" (2). "Matter cannot be said to be: it is the substance itself which exists" (3). This is perhaps not so pertinent here, but the passive modes are affected in that they are the same materially and substantially but differ formally (4): they are the same materially, since the matter in every case is the same

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(1) F.C. Copleston, Op.cit. p.88.

(2) F.C. Copleston, Op.cit., p.87.

(3) St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, 2.54; quoted by Copleston, p.87.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #12: sunt eadem materialiter et realiter, quia quod dicit modus essendi absolute, dicit modus intelligendi passivus, prout refertur ad intellectum; et quod dicit modus intelligendi passivus, dicit modus significandi passivus prout refertur ad vocem.



property i.e. modus essendi of the thing under consideration, and the matter is always 'informable' (1) by an active mode either of understanding or signifying. They are also the same substantially (realiter) since they are all dealing with the same property of the thing (2).

#### 4.222 Modus intelligendi passivus (3)

From the active mode of understanding we pass to the passive mode, so that the mental concept, i.e. the thing as understood by the mind, can receive the signification which will take it to yet another level. Although we are talking about an active and a passive mode, we are nevertheless dealing with the same act of understanding (4). We have in fact to deal with three factors, i.e. the act of understanding, and the mode of understanding which may be active or passive. Therefore the difference between the active and passive modes of understanding will be purely material; it will not be ~~material~~ <sup>formal</sup>, by virtue of the fact that they both stem from the same property of the intellect.

(1) cf. p. 46-7.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #12: conveniunt autem realiter; nam modus essendi dicit absolute proprietatem rei; et modus intelligendi passivus dicit proprietatem rei sub modo intelligendi; et modus significandi passivus dicit proprietatem rei sub ratione consignificandi.

(3) cf. Appendix B.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #14: eadem est ratio intelligendi.



The modus essendi, intelligendi passivus, and significandi passivus are the same materially and substantially, but differ formally; substantially they are the same because they all deal with the same property of the thing, and materially they are the same (1), since no substantial change is involved but merely one of level, which in fact creates the formal difference, since it is the acts of being, understanding and signifying which are the "source of the characteristic qualities, activity and behaviour" (2) which represent this change. It is possible to illustrate the formal and material similarities and dissimilarities between the levels of modes in the form of a diagram:

		Modus essendi	
	modus intelligendi activus	modus intelligendi passivus	
modus significandi activus	<del>modus</del>	modus significandi passivus	

*formalities*

*materiality*

Although these modes of understanding may be passive, they appear to perform a vital function, in that they represent the link between one stage or level and the next, e.g. the intellect has understood the property of the thing

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(1) Though they all deal with the property of the thing, there is in the passive mode of understanding the element of 'intellectus', which in Thomas's system can be considered as logically presupposed in contrast to Siger's temporal statement.

(2) F.C. Copleston, Op.cit., p.88.



and has done so actively, so it becomes the role of the passive mode to link this action with the previous mode which is the *modus essendi* and it is also the link between the act of understanding and the act of signifying, since the *modus significandi activus* becomes the expression of the properties of the thing as they have been understood by the mind. The *modus intelligendi passivus* indicates the property of the thing but as comprehended by the intellect (*ab intellectu apprehensa*) <sup>(1)</sup>, and thereby the *modus significandi activus* takes over from the *modus essendi*, i.e. it becomes the expression of the thing or of its properties as conceived by the mind.

At the vital levels of understanding and signifying we have two channels whereby the energy created by the activity of the intellect can pass to the passive state and either remain there and be lost or else pass to a higher level, e.g. the movement is from the *modus intelligendi passivus* (which has understood the property of the thing) to the *modus significandi activus*; similarly, though none of our authors say this <sup>(2)</sup>, the *modus significandi activus*, or the level of expression, becomes the point at

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(1) Such a statement is very suggestive of the modified realism or conceptualism of the Modistae, which they inherited from the philosophical theories of their day, cf. pp. 40-44.

(2) cf. p. 165: 171: 196.



which vox and significatio are added. It is at this point that the grammarian enters, but presumably before the modi significandi can operate grammatically, the properties of the thing have to have been signified, and only then can the various aspects, essential and accidental, of the thing be used and expressed grammatically. One might say that the words in a dictionary represent the repository for the modi significandi passivi; they do not assume the functions of the varied qualities of the active modes of signifying, until they have, so to speak, been taken out of the dictionary and used actively in some form of connected discourse.

#### 4.23. Modus signandi (1).

Of the grammarians of the period whose work has been consulted, Siger de Courtrai is the only one (2) to insert between the modes of understanding and signification, the mode of designation (modus signandi). The modus intelligendi is followed by the modus signandi, since once the thing has been understood and comprehended, it must then be designated by the vox (3), even though meaning or signification has still not been added. This stage is the

(1) cf. Appendix B.

(2) Siger describes it as 'modus seu ratio signandi'; he is the only one to make of it a mode, but Thomas, in describing the dictio, does on one occasion make use of the term 'ratio signandi'.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: voces sunt signa passionum.



one at which the modus essendi receives its first external expression; hitherto it has <sup>me</sup> merely been understood, but now it is clearly marked and is ready to receive meaning which will give it grammatical status. The modus signandi marks therefore another important stage forward; hitherto the vox had been an amorphous element without any positive function, ~~but now it becomes~~ <sup>and even now is not yet</sup> a grammatical functive (1), <sup>although</sup> ~~since~~ the intellect has now bestowed upon the vox the power of designating something, and as a result the vox becomes a dictio (2). Vox now becomes functional as a dictio, i.e. as something capable of designating, though it will not become grammatically functional until it reaches the level of modus significandi.

Like the modus intelligendi it is divided into active and passive. Siger tells us that the modus signandi is the thing of reason (ens rationis) which is given to the vox by the intellect by means of which the vox designates the thing (3). The mediaeval philosopher looked upon the 'ens rationis' as "that which has being in the understanding which considers it, and which can have no being outside the understanding" (4).

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(1) L. Hjelmslev, Prolegomena, p.83. (Definition 9): (functive is) object that has function to other objects.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: per rationem signandi vox formaliter dicitur dictio.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: modus seu ratio signandi activus est ratio quaedam seu ens rationis concessum voci ab intellectu secundum quod talis vox talem rem signat.

(4) R. McKeon, Selections from Mediaeval Philosophers, Pt.II., p.451.



Again the passive mode plays its part as store-house of the information acquired up to this level: it is the link between the active mode of designation and the thing itself, i.e. it refers to the thing which has been designated by the vox (1).

These three modes of being, understanding and designating have brought us to the grammatical level; we have passed from the thing baldly considered, which, combined with the vox and the modes of understanding and designating, has become a word. But before the word can become a grammatical function, it must become a *pars orationis*, and to become a *pars orationis* it must acquire signification and consignification (2), and this will happen at the level of the *modus significandi*. It is, therefore, at this level that the grammarian enters on the scene, because it is his task to take the *dictio*, give it meaning (especially functional, i.e. grammatical, rather than notional) and thus turn it into a grammatical unit (3). John of Dacia tells us (4) that the process is not even complete

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.94: *modus seu ratio signandi passivus est ipsa res mediante ratione signandi passiva per vocem signata seu ratio signandi relata ad ipsam rem.*

(2) cf. p. 136-7.

(3) cf. de Saussure's theory of 'l'entité linguistique' and 'l'unité linguistique', *Cours* p.144-9.

(4) John of Dacia: *modus construendi est subiectum in grammatica.* This is, of course, implied in Siger's *modus consignificandi* and Thomas's *Diasynthetica*.



at the level of *modus significandi*; a *pars orationis* is useless unless it is made to combine and operate in conjunction with other *partes orationis* - this becomes the '*modus construendi*' <sup>(1)</sup> the final object of grammar.

#### 4.24 Modus significandi.

The preceding sections of the categories should really be considered a preamble to the grammatical element, and are not at all properly within the province or competence of the grammarian. Many linguists of today would rigorously exclude all such considerations from the scope of the grammarian <sup>(2)</sup>. All linguists are agreed, however, that meaning must play a part, indeed an important part, in all forms of linguistic analysis, though few modern linguists would argue that meaning should be the sole, main or indeed any criterion in the setting up of formal word-classes or other grammatical constituents, and in this sense they would categorically oppose a great many of the ideas of the *Modistae*.

The consideration of the pre-grammatical modes had left us in effect with the *dictio*, the function of which is to designate the thing by means of the *vox*.

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(1) This is a term not normally used by either Siger or Thomas.

(2) Bloomfield and his followers would dismiss it as mentalistic and impressionistic; nevertheless the *modi significandi* were a way of handling the same formal facts of Latin grammar that any modern linguist would have to deal with, and these prior modes were for the *Modistae* a very necessary piece of equipment in constructing and describing the modes of signifying.



The dictio becomes a pars orationis by means of the modus significandi, and it is at this point that the grammarian states his understanding of the reality he has been considering in a form which is expressible in language, since, as Martin of Dacia says, whatever is connected with understanding is also connected with signifying (1). To be quite true, it is not until we come to the modus significandi activus that the grammarian really begins to function. It has already been suggested (2) that the Modistae used terms such as modus significandi really as generic terms - Thomas offers us no definition of modus significandi as such, nor does Siger in his Summa and even in his Sophismata he defines it only as an action of the mind in understanding the reality which it will express in speech (3). For Martin of Dacia, however, the modus significandi is the property of the thing signified by the vox (4), and therefore just as the thing is distinguished by its properties, so the pars orationis is distinguished by its many modi significandi by means of which a grammatical statement may be made. The modus significandi is thus the raw material of the grammarian.

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(1) Martin of Dacia: quidquid contingit intelligere contingit significare.

(2) cf. p. 110.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p. 130: modus significandi existens in intellectu est illud mediante quo vox signat modum essendi circa rem.

(4) Martin of Dacia: modus significandi est proprietas rei significata per vocem.



The modus significandi follows the modus intelligendi and is divided into active and passive; the passive mode is the modus essendi which has been signified, the active is the mode which leads to the various sub-modes which constitute the means whereby a language can begin to express its various concepts (1). These other aspects of the modus significandi are the absolute and respective modes, and the essential and accidental modes which will be discussed shortly. The structure of the metalanguage makes a parallel between the thing and its expression, thus:-

res	=	Modus essendi
intellectus rei	=	modus intelligendi
vox significans rem	=	modus significandi

The mode of signifying is sub-divided into the active and passive modes; the grammarian has, however, no concern with the passive mode, since by its very nature of being passive it cannot take part in the act of either signifying or consignifying. The grammarian's real interest will lie with the active mode of signifying and its operational dimensions, i.e. (i) the essential and (ii) accidental modes, (iii) the absolute and (iv) respective modes, and in the sub-modes of the essential mode, i.e. generalis and specificus (in the case of Siger) and generalissimus, subalternus and specificus (in the case of Thomas).

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(1) cf. p. 171-2.



The essential mode is designated to express the essence of the pars in question, while the accidental mode is designated to treat those attributes of the pars which do not belong to its essence, though they occur by reason of its essence. The absolute mode refers to features of the pars which render it discrete from the other partes but without resorting to comparison with features of another pars. The respective mode deals with those features of the pars which permit it to operate in significant concord, <sup>i.e.</sup> both governmental concord and concord of gender, number, case, etc. (1), with other partes orationis at a level higher than that of the word-class (2).

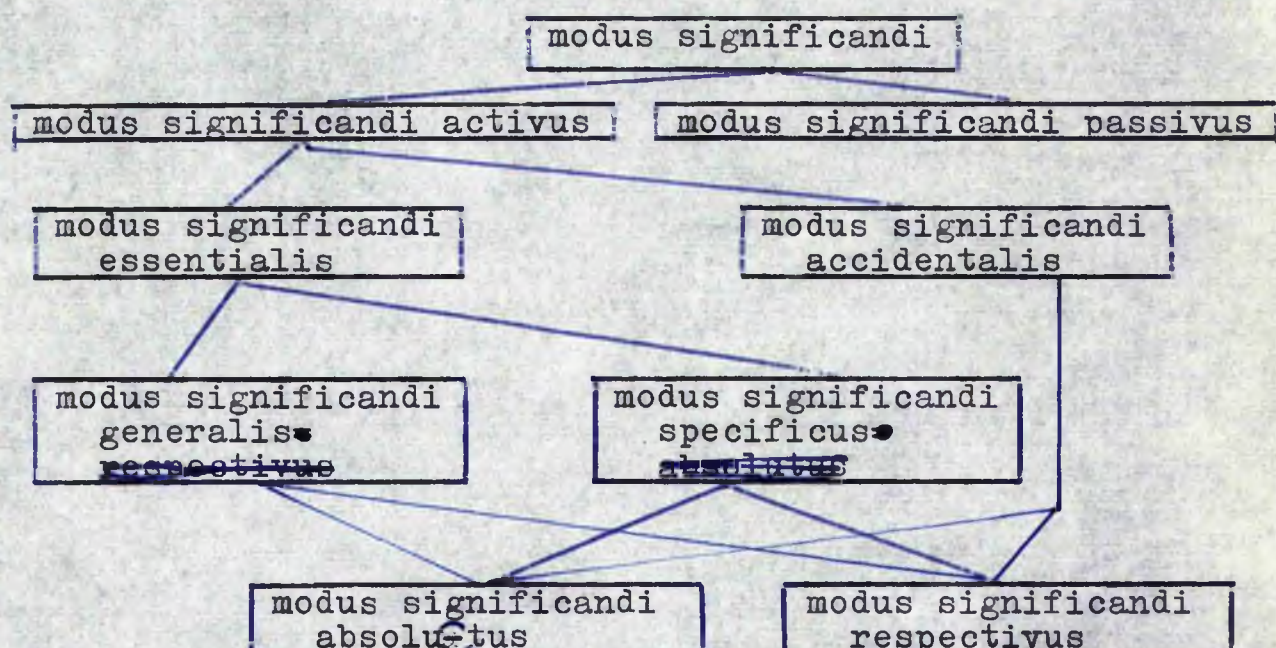
There is a great measure of agreement between Siger and Thomas on the nature of the essential and accidental modes (3), but their organisation of the essential mode is substantially different. It would not serve any real purpose at this stage to discuss this organisational matter in detail, but it does have the effect of influencing the relationships between the dimensions already mentioned. In Siger's scheme, both the essential and accidental modes, by their natures, can be expressed in terms of absolute and respective in their inter-relationships: Thomas's organisation means that the essential mode has relationships with

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- (1) Siger de Cour~~ti~~<sup>ti</sup>, p.138: est casus modus significandi accidentalis respectivus designans circa rem proprietatem per quam unum constructibile determinat dependentiam alterius.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #187: intrinsecum sunt modi significandi respectivi, ratione quorum vel unum constructibile est ad alterum dependens, vel alterius dependentiam determinans.
- (3) cf. Appendix A.



the other partes orationis <sup>(1)</sup> since it is partly specific, but its sub-divisions of subalternus and specialissimus, which are much more detailed lists of the various words which make up the pars orationis in question, are made always with reference to the specific essence of the pars in question, which is an absolute mode; the result is that only the accidental mode will be described in its absolute and respective relationships <sup>(2)</sup>. These dimensions can be represented by means of the following diagrams <sup>(3)</sup>:-

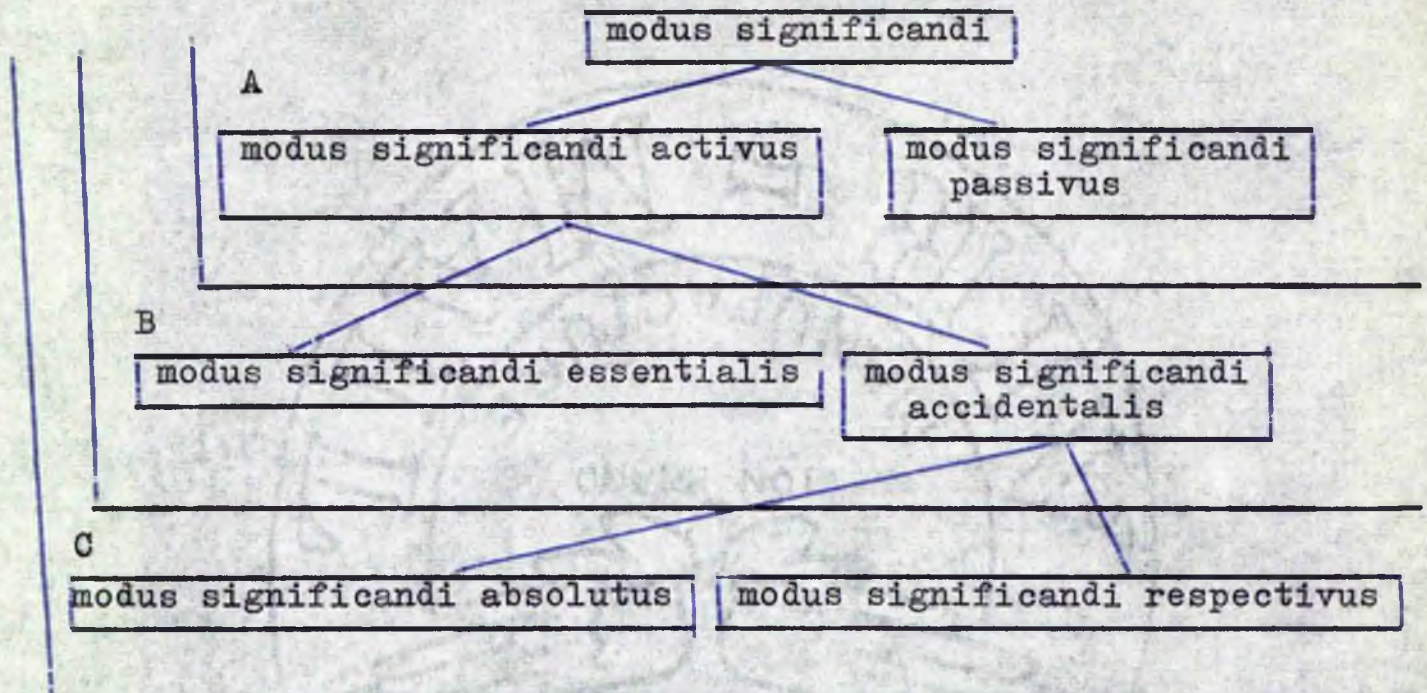
(a) Siger:



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- (1) Thomas's modus generalissimus contains the features of Siger's modus generalis which is a respective mode and also of Siger's modus specificus which is an absolute mode.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #22: modus significandi accidentalis dividitur in modum significandi accidentalem absolutum et respectivum.
- (3) cf. p.615-23 and also Appendix A.  
It should be noted that Siger's general mode is always respectivus, ~~and in the declinable partes at least, the specific mode is absolutus, since the specific mode is used to distinguish the pars in question from the other partes.~~



b) Thomas:



A symbolises the bare outlines of the active and passive dimension; B the dimension of the essential and accidental modes: *A and B, containing features of both, since the dimension of* C is a combination of absolute and relative must contain features from the essential/accidental and active/passive oppositions.

The modus significandi deals with the linguistic unit at 'word' level; the modus significandi cannot create a sentence, since it is, to quote Siger, 'ens rationis simplex', whereas the sentence is something composite. The sentence is made up of partes orationis, which are established in terms of their modi significandi, but the modi significandi themselves play no active part in the syntax of the sentence; it must be stressed that they play no active part, but it remains a function of the respective modes of



signifying, to realise the congruence of any sentence (1).

There is then a necessary relationship between the *modus significandi* which is a concept or state of mind and grammar which is the expression of this concept by means of '*sermo congruus*'. But, as Siger concedes (2), the grammarian does not produce this '*oratio congrua*' by means of the modes of signifying; his argument is that the *modus significandi* is still formally (*formaliter*) in the mind. This is recognised by the Modistae who have shown by means of their rudimentary IC analysis (3) and their concept of the two basic types of construction (4), that the analysis of the *partes orationis* is not enough; they recognised that syntax is based on the relationships between words - hence their need for a *modus consignificandi* to state the syntactic function (i.e. meaning) of each *pars orationis*, but they also recognised that such syntactic relationships can be expressed only by means of the respective modes. This suggests that the Modistae further recognised, and this is a very important achievement on their part, that, by using the respective modes to express word-relationships, morphology was sometimes syntactically relevant, and such formal

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.153: *omnis constructio congrua est per modos significandi proportionales.*

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.129: *per modos significandi non reddit grammaticus orationem congruam.*

(3) cf. p. 508: 556: 563.

(4) cf. 5.24 where these constructions are discussed in detail.



relations, even if the Modistae did dress them up in their semantics, become in effect the means of achieving 'oratio congrua'. In Siger's system of analysis, all eight partes orationis differ in terms of their specific mode of signifying, but this specific mode has no syntactic function since it is absolute; the syntactic relations of each pars, which are its respective modes, are derived from one section of its essential mode, i.e. the modus significandi essentialis generalis, and the accidental modes of the pars in question.

However, these various sub-modes of signifying can now be considered as self-contained, since language is now operating by itself, having passed through the various stages of being, understanding, signifying; the pars orationis can be distinguished by operating by means of the modus significandi, and therefore the various sub-modes of signifying will of necessity be first considered inherently and then in relation to each other.

#### 4.241 Modus significandi activus (1)

It was stated in the last section (2) that the modus significandi is the understanding of the thing as expressed in speech, but the active mode now becomes the final link whereby the word becomes grammatically functional, the

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(1) cf. Appendix B.

(2) cf. 4.24, p. 164.



dimensions of absolutus, essentialis, etc. being used to determine the actual grammatical status of the word. The vox qua vox, as we have seen, is not the subject matter of grammar: the vox and the act of signification produce the dictio which is the word but without any grammatical attributes: the dictio, i.e. vox and significatio or expression and meaning, now acquires a mode of signifying and becomes a pars orationis, which is the smallest grammatical unit in the Modistic system. The active mode of signifying is therefore the mode by means of which the vox signifies the modus essendi of the thing grammatically, or else some particular property of the thing, e.g. singular number which, though it may not be the thing itself, does refer to the property of the thing; the process of creating the pars orationis is with the active mode of signifying therefore complete. The modus significandi activus is derived eventually from the modus essendi, but there is not a direct line of development, since the mode of being must first become a mental concept (conceptus intellectus) and remain in the mind until it is expressed by the vox in the form of an active mode of signifying. It is therefore the systematic nature of the combination of the vox and the active mode of signifying which produces the pars orationis (1).

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(1) It is also possible to see why Thomas equates the ratio consignificandi to the modus significandi activus, and we see that they are not the same thing as would appear from a cursory examination of the text. The modus significandi activus possesses meaning merely by virtue of its being a mode of signifying, but this is not enough: clearly, notional meaning is not enough and if a grammatical system is to be set up in terms of meaning, it has to be done in terms of syntactic meaning, not root (or primary) meaning.



It must be realised that, although these divisions of modus essendi, intelligendi, signandi and significandi are arbitrary and artificial, the actual modes themselves are purely fictional and inactive, i.e. the modus intelligendi does not function as such, but it is the active mode which tells us that the intellect has perceived and comprehended the property of the thing. ~~has been comprehended by the intellect.~~ And so it is, right up the scale until we reach the modus significandi activus which signifies what has been, in the case of Siger, designated by the (previous (1)) modus signandi passivus - in the case of Thomas, what has been understood by the intellect; thus the modus significandi activus takes over from the modus intelligendi

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(1) The word 'previous' is used since Siger tends to give the impression of a temporal as well as a logical sequence in his description of the metalanguage, e.g. p.94: modum signandi sequitur modus significandi.



passivus (1).

The importance to the Modistic system of the *modus significandi activus* acting with the ability to *consignify* (2) or to differentiate this functional meaning will be appreciated from the fact that the thing can have several properties which are not mutually exclusive and which will require

- (1) Siger uses the *modus signandi* as the level where the *dictio* can be introduced into the logical sequence from the amorphous *vox* to the grammatically meaningful *pars orationis*. Thomas dispenses with the *modus signandi*, and instead gives the combination of *vox* and *significatio* a double role to play; he tells us that the intellect uses the *vox* to signify and to *consignify*, and in so doing ascribes a double system to it, i.e. (1) the ability to signify (*ratio significandi*) i.e. the *significatio* by means of which the *signum* is created.. which in combination with the *vox* formally becomes the *dictio* and (2) the ability to *consignify* (*ratio consignificandi*), i.e. the *modus significandi activus*, by means of which the *vox* acting significantly creates the *consignum* and combined together they formally become a *pars orationis*. Siger has in the end a similar structure; at the end of his preamble, he tells us that a *pars* is a combination of *vox* and *dictio*, but a *pars* is really a *pars* only by virtue of the mode of *consignification*. What is implied here is that a *dictio* possesses meaning, what I call for this purpose 'potential' meaning; a *dictio* possesses *vox* too, but it is still pre-grammatical. It becomes grammatical by means of the active mode of meaning, which creates from the potential meaning a functional or distinctive meaning, which is the *consignification*. It is this *consignification* or functional meaning which distinguishes the *pars orationis* from the *dictio* and which permits the *pars* to operate grammatically. The commentators and critics have used '*dolor*' and '*doleo*' to illustrate; they both have the same *vox* and *significatio*, i.e. primary meaning but they possess different *modi significandi*, the former '*per modum permanentis*' and the latter '*per modum fluxus*' and it is this which represents the *consignification*: in other words, they possess one *Gesamtbedeutung*, but different *geformte Bedeutung* or *modi significandi activi*. It is then this *geformte Bedeutung* or *consignificatio* or the *modus significandi activus* which for the Modistae is the real matter of the grammarian.
- (2) cf. p. III-2: 121-4.



as many active modes of signifying to express them (1).

The *modus significandi activus* must refer to some property of the thing: Thomas argues that the intellect is a passive power, indeterminate in itself and does not refer to any determinate act, unless this act has been determined in another manner. If then the intellect uses the *vox* to signify something by means of a determined *modus significandi activus*, this can only be by means of some determined property of the thing, which means that this property of the thing must correspond to some *modus significandi activus* (2).

The *modus significandi activus* differs formally (*formaliter*) and materially (*materialiter*) from the *modus essendi* and the *modus intelligendi activus*; the *modus essendi* refers to the thing 'an und für sich' (3), the *modus intelligendi activus* refers to the property of the mind (4), but the *modus significandi activus* refers to the

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, *#14*: in una et eadem re possunt reperiri diversae proprietates rei, non repugnantes, a quibus sumi possunt diversi modi significandi activi.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, *#6*: cum intellectus vocem ad significandum sub aliquo modo significandi activo imponit, ad ipsam rei proprietatem aspicit, a qua modum significandi activum originaliter trahit; quia intellectus cum sit virtus passiva, de se indeterminata, ad actum determinatum non vadit, nisi aliunde determinetur. Unde cum imponit vocem ad significandum sub determinato modo significandi activo, a determinata rei proprietate necessario movetur; ergo cuilibet modo significandi activo correspondet aliqua proprietas rei, seu *modus essendi* rei.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, *#12*: *modus essendi* est rei proprietas absolute.
- (4) Thomas of Erfurt, *#13*: *modus intelligendi activus* dicit proprietatem intellectus.



property of the vox which expresses the functional or class meaning (1).

The modus significandi activus and passivus differ materially (materialiter) but are the same formally (formaliter); the passive mode refers to the property of the thing as it has been signified in terms of its functional or class-meaning, whereas the active mode expresses the property of the thing in the form of its functional meaning. They are alike 'formaliter' because it is the same class-meaning, i.e. ability to consignify (2), which is involved, the difference being caused 'materialiter' by virtue of the fact that the passive mode has no power of expression and therefore refers only to the property of the thing, whereas the active mode reveals the property of the 'vox significativa' (5), and this material difference might almost be described as the difference of content and expression.

The modus significandi activus is divided into modus significandi essentialis and modus significandi accidentalis, modus significandi absolutus and modus significandi respectivus.

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #13: modus significandi activus dicit proprietatem vocis, quae est ratio consignificandi.

(2) cf. p. 75.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #17: modus significandi activus, cum sit proprietates vocis significativae, materialiter est in voce significativa, ut in subiecto.



4.242      Modus significandi passivus (1)

This is the mode which relates the modus essendi to the modus significandi activus; it is in fact the modus essendi as it has been signified by the vox. Its grammatical function is nullified by its very passivity; it is not a 'principium constructionis', nor is it, in Thomas's terms, a 'principium partis orationis' and as a result can play no grammatical role (2). It is therefore not a matter for the grammarian; intrinsically, it does not interest the grammarian since it is not formally discrete from the active mode.

The passive mode is the same as the modus essendi and the modus intelligendi passivus 'materialiter' and 'realiter', i.e. substantially (3), but differs 'formaliter'. This is so because the same thing is referred to whether it be comprehended by the intellect or signified by the vox, but it will differ 'formaliter' since on the formal level the modus essendi refers to the property of the thing absolutely, the modus intelligendi passivus refers to the property of the thing but by means of the ratio intelligendi, and the modus significandi passivus refers to the same

(1) cf. Appendix B.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #5: modi significandi passivi ad grammaticam non pertinent, nisi per accidens, quia non sunt principium partis orationis, nec formale, nec efficiens, cum sint rerum proprietates.

(3) cf. the earlier discussion, pp. 69-77, of the difference between 'materialiter' and 'formaliter' and the implication of these terms in Modistic theory.



property of the thing but this time means of the ratio consignificandi (1).

The modus significandi activus and passivus differ 'materialiter' but are the same 'formaliter' (2). They are the same 'formaliter' because the act of signification (ratio significandi) is the same; there will be no formal difference, since the active and passive modes are functionally different (i.e. materialiter), but significantly the same, i.e. at the same level (formaliter). They differ 'materialiter' because the modus significandi passivus belongs to the thing itself and constitutes the link between its properties and their signification, whereas the modus significandi activus represents not the property of the thing but of the 'vox significativa' which expresses this property. The active mode is essentially dynamic, whereas the passive mode remains static.

#### 4.243 Modus significandi absolutus et respectivus (3)

It has been decided to treat this dimension as one, without making an organisational distinction between the two parts. In a sense (especially a Modistic sense) the division of absolute and respective modes of signifying is somewhat peripheral since it adds nothing to the description

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(1) cf. p. 175.

(2) cf. p. 75.

(3) cf. Appendix B.



of either the essence or the accidents of the pars. It really is operational only at a stage when the modern grammarian would be deciding on the formal elements which permit a pars orationis to function: the function of the absolute/respective opposition is to separate those modes of signifying which can function syntactically from those which cannot.

The category of absolute is internal to the modus significandi, or more exactly the pars in question, and excludes all reference to the modi significandi of other partes orationis (1). The modus significandi specificus, as opposed to the modus generalis (categories peculiar to Siger) (2), refers to an intrinsic feature of the pars in question, a feature which renders it discrete from the other partes orationis - it must be noted that the discreteness between absolute and relative is affected by the manner in which Siger and Thomas divide their essential mode: this difference has been mentioned (3) as well as its affect on their analysis (4). This uniqueness of the modus specificus makes of it a modus significandi which will, in Siger's system, be absolute, since it is a modus

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #2: modus significandi accidentalis absolutus dicitur ille per quem unum constructibile non habet respectum ad alterum, sed solum ad rei proprietatem.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: iste modus significandi (specificus) non est principium constructionis quia est absolutus.

(3) cf. p. 138-40: 60-62: 167-8.

(4) cf. p. 166-7: 169-70.



significandi which refers to the *modus essendi* in question only. There are certain of the accidental modes, e.g. species and figura <sup>(1)</sup> (in the *nomen*) which are intrinsic features of a particular *pars*, and as a result they are classed as absolute which also means that they cannot have any separate syntactic function; in Siger's system, one function of the *modi significandi* is to act as '*principium constructionis*', i.e. as the member of a construction. This is not possible for any absolute mode: the congruence of any construction depends, *inter alia*, on the conformity of the various *modi significandi*, which means that these different modes must possess an inter-proportionality by virtue of which they can combine to produce an '*oratio congrua*', but the absolute modes cannot enter in any such relation, since by definition they take into consideration no other factors than their own intrinsic features.

Thomas has a slightly different organisation; in the first place, he has no *modus significandi generalis*, but his *modus significandi essentialis generalissimus* can be described as mid-way between Siger's general and specific modes, embracing features of both modes, which would suggest that the *modus generalissimus* would be respective by virtue

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(1) cf. p. 247.



of its similarity to Siger's *modus generalis* and absolute by virtue of its similarity to Siger's *modus specificus* (1). In actual fact, Thomas arranges matters quite differently; in the first place, the dichotomy of absolute and respective is a matter for the accidental modes only, and in the second place, the *modi significandi* and *partes orationis* are divided into two levels - *Etymologia* and *Diasynthetica*: at the level of *Etymologia*, the *partes orationis* are considered purely and simply in terms of themselves without reference to other *partes orationis*, and thus they will be absolute; at the level of *Diasynthetica*, which is by definition the relationship of one *pars orationis* to another, these different *modi significandi* will become respective as a result of the fact that the *partes orationis* and their *modi significandi* are no longer considered by and for themselves but in their mutual relations to each other. (2)

#### 4.244      Modus significandi essentialis (3)

This mode, along with the accidental mode, constitutes the descriptive apparatus of the eight *partes orationis*

- (1) Siger's *modus generalis* is a respective mode and his *modus specificus* is an absolute mode; thus Thomas's *modus generalissimus* of the nomen is the '*modus esse*' which is equivalent to Siger's *modus generalis*, and '*determinata apprehensio*' which is equivalent to Siger's *modus specificus*.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #22: *primo prout sunt principium formale partis orationis absolute, secundum quem modum pertinent ad Etymologiam; deinde prout sunt principium intrinsecum constructionis unius partis cum alia, secundum quem pertinent ad Diasyntheticam.*
- (3) cf. Appendix B.



in terms of themselves: Modistic syntactical doctrine makes use of these partes orationis as they have been described in the form of various modes and uses them as constructs in the *modus construendi* <sup>(1)</sup> which will thus achieve the final end of grammar, the '*oratio constructa congrua*' <sup>(2)</sup>.

However, of all the co-dimensions of the *modus significandi activus*, this is probably the most important, since all the others derive their nature and function from the essence of the *pars* in question. Hitherto, we have found a large measure of agreement among the Modistae in dealing with the 'elements', and a similar agreement will be found in dealing with the accidental modes. (This statement is made with obvious reservations, since the incompleteness of Siger's work becomes increasingly apparent). It should not however, be imagined that it is suggested that in dealing with the essential modes, there is a large measure of disagreement between Siger and Thomas. There is disagreement between them, but it is not one of doctrine or substance, but one of presentation and descriptive apparatus, with Siger starting at a level 'earlier' to Thomas, who uses refinements of depth which are absent from Siger. <sup>(3)</sup>

They both sub-divide the *modus essentialis*, but in the case of Siger the sub-divisions of *generalis* and *specificus*

(1) cf. p. 162-3.

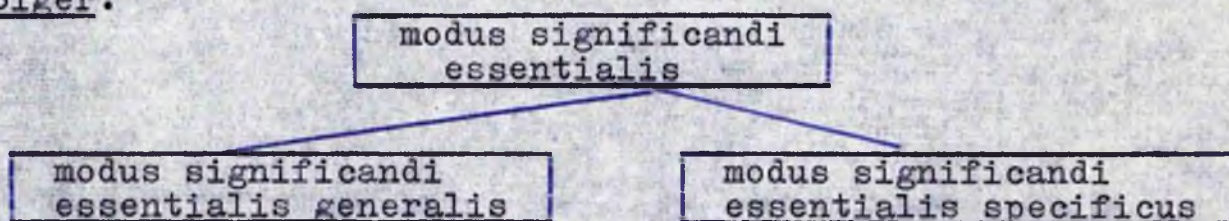
(2) cf. p. 163: 540: 577.

(3) cf. Appendix A.

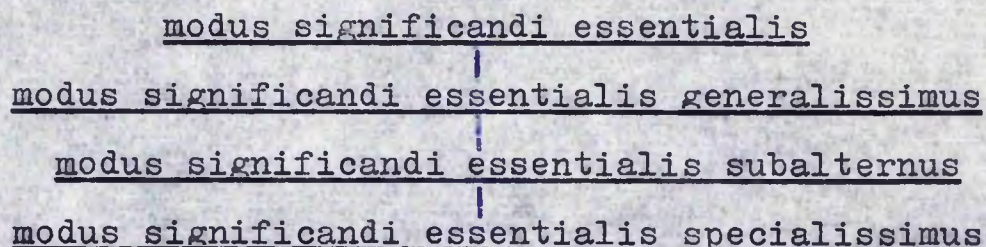


are equal and parallel, and both stem from the essential property of the *modus significandi activus* of the *pars* in question, whereas Thomas starts at a later stage, i.e. midway between Siger's *generalis* and *specificus* and proceeds to sub-divide, so to speak, in depth, adding refinements of '*subalternus*' and '*specialissimus*' to his sub-division of '*generalissimus*'. This difference can be schematised thus:-

(a) Siger:



(b) Thomas:



But as we have said, it is a matter of analytical procedure rather than of content, Michel de Marbais would appear to have followed a procedure somewhat like Siger's, whereas John of Dacia <sup>(1)</sup> uses only the *modus significandi essentialis generalis* and the *modus significandi accidentalis*: Martin of Dacia, a contemporary and fellow-countryman of John's, uses a slightly different approach; he describes first of

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(1) For an assessment of John of Dacia's position vis-à-vis the Modistae, cf. p. 20, f. 1.



all the modus significandi essentialis generalis <sup>(1)</sup> of each pars orationis, and then he analyses the modus significandi specialis and the modus significandi accidentalis of each. On the whole Martin's method is the same as Thomas's except for these minor variations: Roos suggests <sup>(2)</sup> that these might be pedagogical devices, which supports the contention that it is procedure not subject matter which varies.

Siger tells us that the modus essentialis refers to the essence of the pars, and that it is divided into two parts, i.e. modus significandi essentialis generalis and essentialis specificus or specialis; for Thomas the modus essentialis is the mode by means of which the pars has its being, and is divided into the modus significandi essentialis generalissimus, subalternus and specialissimus.

For Siger, the modus essentialis therefore contains the essence of the pars, e.g. substance and quality in the nomen, but such a categorisation is not sufficient, for we shall see that certain partes orationis have certain essential features in common, e.g. substance (substantia) is common to both the nomen and pronomen, and yet they may vary

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(1) Martin's use of the general mode should not be confused with Siger's, since for Martin every pars orationis is distinct (and presumably discrete) by virtue of its general mode of signifying, which is thus much closer to Thomas's modus generalissimus.

(2) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p.141.



through certain other essential features. Siger suggests by implication that there are three essences involved, i.e. being, becoming and disposition, and as a result he establishes three general essential modes, which is tantamount to saying that there are three 'archipartes', but in order to achieve the eight partes orationis of traditional grammar, he subdivides these three archipartes into specific aspects of their essence; the difference between the general and the specific decides the nature of the individual partes orationis. It might be feasible to argue that in the first instance essence is considered as something common to all natures by which different entities are grouped into one main category; in the second instance, essence is considered as something primary by means of which the thing is distinguished from other things. Siger suggests as much when he defines 'generalis' as embodying an essence which can be found in other species of the pars and will be identical in all the other forms of this pars, but on the other hand 'specificus' is like the differentia specifica used in logical definitions - it separates one species from another, and in terms of Siger's system, it separates a pars from all the others so that it is entirely self-contained and separate from the others in terms of its essence and its function: this is why the modus specificus can have no syntactic function.



Thomas starts his system a little 'later': he has no *modus generalis* which would embrace more than one *pars*. His *modus generalissimus* refers to the essence of any particular *pars orationis* and of any subordinate *pars*; this might appear at first sight to be a suggestion of some system of 'archipartes', but it is in fact so arranged, so that certain *partes* which have certain features of their essence in common can be described without a separate unit having to be set up. Thomas's *modus generalissimus* is in many ways a more economic and at the same time a more detailed statement than Siger's, in that his *modus generalissimus* can be said to cover in effect the features of Siger's *modus generalis* and *specificus*; on the other hand, it might be argued that Siger is groping towards a more formal statement (even though it is stated in mentalist semantic terms), in that he is implying that, e.g. the noun and pronoun have formal characteristics in common (1). Thomas, however, having set up his *modus generalissimus*, is now in a position to add further refinements (which are in a large measure absent from Siger's description): he adds two sub-modes of the *modus generalissimus*, i.e. *subalternus* and *specialissimus*; the latter is the ultimate refinement. Just as the *modus generalissimus* is designed to describe the essential features which are shared by all the subordinate parts of the *pars* in

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(1) By having the *modus esse* in common, they can become the *suppositum*; cf. p. 93-4 for a discussion of this term.



question, the modus specialissimus describes the essence of some of the subordinate parts but in much more minute detail: the modus subalternus assumes a middle position between the modus generalissimus and specialissimus, and deals with the essence of the subordinate parts of the pars (1).

It was stated earlier that the difference between Siger and Thomas was largely terminological; the apparent difference in their essential modes is resolved if we stagger the scale of relationship. There is no one-to-one relationship, because Thomas's modus generalissimus contains features which are found in Siger's modus generalis and other features which are found in Siger's modus specificus, but Siger has nothing which compares to the subdivisions of Thomas's modus generalissimus, i.e. subalternus and specialissimus, and their analytical procedures can therefore be represented thus:

Siger:

generalis

specificus

Thomas:

generalissimus

subalternus

specialissimus

The result is a curious imbalance: Thomas presents us with a very detailed description of the modus essentialis,

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #21: nec generalissime, nec specialissime, sed medio modo se habens.



whereas Siger seems to imply that the essence of the pars is sufficient to speak for itself. Siger organises his material in such a way that his absolute and respective modes, which in Thomas's system are really sub-divisions of the *modus accidentalis*, are in some cases cross-dimensions rather than co-dimensions of the essential mode (1), and depend a great deal for their discreteness on features which differentiate the general from the specific mode. This discreteness would be much more apparent if Siger had described his general and specific modes with the same wealth of detail that Thomas gives us of his essential mode. The following diagram gives some idea of the cross-references between the essential and accidental modes on the one hand and the absolute and respective modes on

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1) cf. p. 178-80.



the other (1) :-

			absolutus	respecti- vus
essentialis	Siger	generalis specificus	* (+)	+
	Thomas	generalis- simus	+	
		subalter- nus	+	
		special- issimus	+	
accidentalis		casus		+
		coniugatio		+
		figura	+	
		genus		+
		gradus		+
		modus		+
		numerus		+
		persona		+
		qualitas		+
		species	+	
		tempus		+

The accidental modes have been added in order to make the picture more complete even at the danger of anticipating too much.

#### 4.245 Modus significandi accidentalis (2)

The accidental modes play a significant role in the description of the partes in as striking a manner as

(1) cf. also p. 618: 622.

(2) Siger's *modus specificus* in the *nomen* is *absolutus*, but in the *verb* and *participle* it is *respectivus*.

(3) cf. Appendix B.



Siger's (implied) 'archipars' did to the *modus essentialis*. Grammarians have always commented on the fundamental difference between declinable and indeclinable parts of speech (1): the *Modistae* too had something to say on this topic.

They referred to the declinable partes as the 'partes magis principales' and to the indeclinable partes as the 'partes minus principales'; all the partes have essential modes, but as a result of what might be called the defective nature of their essence, the partes minus principales, i.e. the indeclinable partes have fewer accidental modes (2). Siger tells us in his *Sophisma "O Magister"*, that certain things present themselves foremost to our minds, things such as 'ens' and 'esse' and their properties; modes of signifying which are derived from these properties are 'magis principales' and therefore the partes orationis which are derived from such modi significandi will be 'magis principales' too, and are in fact to be found in the nomen, pronomen, verbum and participium. These four partes have as their accidents - number, person, case, mood, tempus and declension or conjugation. Siger continues that other partes are 'minus principales' for the simple reason that they are derived from properties which are 'minus principales', and are therefore "de bene esse orationis" *quam de esse*"

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(1) R.H. Robins, *A. & M.*, p. 85, et al.

(2) Thomas ascribes *comparatio*, *figura species* only, as accidental modes of the adverb, and *figura*, *species*, *ordo*, as accidental modes of the conjunction: the preposition and the interjection have no accidental modes whatsoever.



quam de esse" (1). Partes which have as their essence either 'esse' or 'ens' are 'magis principales', declinable, and therefore must possess a quota of accidental modes to express the variations which occur to their essence but originate from without their essence; accident can here be defined as "the quality which will 'happen' to a subject in such a way that it does not constitute of the subject nor flow from its essence" (2). The partes orationis were devised to express the concepts of the mind by means of 'sermo congruus', but in fact some partes are equipped to do this, whereas others are not - this difference in function is attested by the presence or absence of the accidental modes: these accidental modes can be established only when the essence of the pars in question has been completely established and stated.

There is one difference between Siger and Thomas, but one which does not seem to be very important; it is however associated with their analysis of the modus essentialis. Thomas divides his accidental modes into absolute and respective; Siger does so obviously but not so categorically. The reason is that Siger's modus essentialis generalis includes more than one pars, so that these partes can be classified as respective at this particular level, at

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.144. What Siger is implying, of course, is that these properties do not derive from 'ens' or 'esse', which, as Siger's philosophical background suggests, are the only constituents of reality.

(2) R. McKeon, Selections from Mediaeval Philosophers, Pt.II, p.424.



least as far as the partes magis principales are concerned, but since the modus specificus is so highly individual, it cannot permit a relationship such as must exist between respective modes. Thomas has no modus essentialis generalis, and his modus generalissimus which can be described as roughly equivalent to Siger's modus specificus will not be a modus respectivus for the same reason that Siger's specificus is not respectivus. As for the accidental modes, in the case of both authors, some will be respective and others will be absolute, depending entirely on their intrinsic qualities, i.e. whether they look back into themselves and are therefore absolute, or look out from themselves, finding their real functional values in terms of their higher relationship to other accidental modes, and are therefore respective.



Chapter V.Partes Orationis.

- 5.0        The partes orationis in general.
- 5.1        Etymologia.
- 5.11       The declinable partes orationis.
- 5.111      Nomen.
- 5.1111     Modus significandi essentialis.
- 5.1112     Modus significandi accidentalis.
- 5.112      Verbum.
- 5.1121     Modus significandi essentialis.
- 5.1122     Modus significandi accidentalis.
- 5.113      Participium.
- 5.1131     Modus significandi essentialis.
- 5.1132     Modus significandi accidentalis.
- 5.114      Pronomen.
- 5.1141     Modus significandi essentialis.
- 5.1142     Modus significandi accidentalis.
- 5.12       The indeclinable partes orationis.
- 5.121      Adverbium.
- 5.1211     Modus significandi essentialis.
- 5.122      Coniunctio.
- 5.1221     Modus significandi essentialis.
- 5.1222     Modus significandi accidentalis.
- 5.123      Praepositio.
- 5.1231     Modus significandi essentialis.
- 5.124      Interiectio.
- 5.1241     Modus significandi essentialis.
- 5.20       Diasynthetica.
- 5.210      Syntax in the Middle Ages.
- 5.211      Theories of the Modistae.
- 5.22       Principia construendi.
- 5.221      Principium materiale.
- 5.222      Principium formale.
- 5.223      Principium efficiens.
- 5.224      Principium finale.



- 5.23      Passiones sermonis.  
5.231      Constructio per definitionem.  
5.232      Congruitas.  
5.233      Perfectio.
- 5.24      Constructio per divisionem.  
5.241      Constructio intransitiva.  
5.2411      Constructio intransitiva actuum.  
5.2412      Congruitas constructionis intransitivae actuum.  
5.2413      Constructio intransitiva personarum.  
5.2414      Congruitas constructionis intransitiviae personarum.
- 5.242      Constructio transitiva.  
5.2421      Constructio transitiva actuum.  
5.2422      Congruitas constructionis transitivae actuum.  
5.2423      Constructio transitiva personarum.  
5.2424      Congruitas constructionis transitivae personarum.  
5.243      Summary.
- 5.3      Conclusion.



## Chapter V.

### Partes Orationis.

#### 5.0 The partes orationis in general.

The tradition of constructing a grammar on the partes orationis of a language is very old already by the Middle Ages <sup>(1)</sup>, but the conception of the nature and function of the partes changed by the 13th Century. Prior to Peter Helias, mediaeval grammarians seem to have been content to reproduce and comment on Donatus and Priscian, but without any logical or metaphysical undertones or implications. The Modistae continued to follow Donatus and Priscian in the organisation of their material, but their presentation of this material differed often very widely from that of their predecessors. Various factors which were mentioned in an earlier chapter <sup>(2)</sup> had contributed to a lively and extensive renewal of grammatical study, but by now, and as a result of some of these factors, the study of grammar was much influenced by logic and philosophy, and the grammarians of the 13th century could not have escaped from this legacy: "Men now sought as the only sound method of research, to derive and justify rules of grammar from

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(1) H. Roos, Op.Cit. p.144: Nun hat zwar schon die antike und mittelalterliche Grammatik die Lehre von den 'partes orationis' gekannt.

(2) cf. p.32-9.



systems of logic and metaphysical theories about the nature of reality" (1). It was this concern with the metaphysics of reality along with similarly heavy emphasis on the theories of the grammarians of antiquity which created the concentration on the partes orationis rather than on syntax, but also at the same time coloured the whole approach of the Modistae to these same partes orationis, or as Roos has aptly put it "die philosophisch-spekulative Durchleutung der sprachlichen Kategorien (partes orationis)" (2). Factors such as the use of the methods of logic, the philosophical theories of the day, which were obviously unknown to their models, i.e. Donatus and Priscian, produced a change not only in presentation but also in terminology and orientation of subject matter.

Roos has called (3) the treatises on the 'modi significandi' "Lehre der Wortklassen", which is a revealing comment on the nature of these mediaeval grammars (4); curiously enough, Roos has also stated (5) that 'diasynthetica', i.e. the section on syntax, was "das Hauptziel der mittelalterlichen

(1) R.H. Robins, *A. & M.*, p. 75.

(2) H. Roos, *Die Modi Significandi*, p.146.

(3) H. Roos, *Sprachdenken im Mittelalter. Classica et Mediaevalia VIII* (1946), p.102.

(4) It shows also a direct line back to Thrax and the conception of grammar among the Alexandrian and post-stoic grammarians, cf. R.H. Robins, *A. & M.* p.39.

(5) H. Roos, *Die Modi Significandi*, p.140.



Grammatik". This is a statement which it is not easy to sustain - indeed Thurot, by implication, denies this <sup>(1)</sup>, and it would seem reasonable to argue that philosophical factors have the effect of laying stress on the theory of the partes orationis rather than on syntax <sup>(2)</sup>.

In the preceding chapter we saw the line and process of development from the vox to the dictio or word, and from the word to the pars orationis; the Modistae render a word grammatical, i.e. make it a pars orationis, by means of its aptitude or ability to signify such and such a mode of being, since all the partes orationis must signify some aspect or quality of things existing in the world of real things: the partes orationis were in fact considered correlatives of things in the world of external reality.

The ability to signify in combination with the verbal sign, i.e. the expression, constitutes the essence of a pars orationis. This is fundamental to Modistic theory; and just as a general class is distinguished by different species, so the different partes orationis will constitute

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(1) Ch.Thurot, Op.cit. p. 237: "Il est singulier qu'aucun grammairien du moyen âge ne paraisse avoir cherché à établir systématiquement et a priori une division de la syntaxe, comme on aimait à le faire à cette époque.

(2) A cursory examination of the materials available would seem to confirm this; Siger is incomplete and has no section at all on syntax, nor, as far as I can establish, did Michel de Marbais. Thomas of Erfurt and Martin of Dacia have sections on syntax but they are much shorter in length, with much less detail, than their sections on 'etymologia'.



the various species of this particular general principle. Similarly, just as grammar is the expression of the general essence of reality with the partes as its various species <sup>(1)</sup>, so each pars orationis must be a combination of its essence which it will share with another pars orationis <sup>(2)</sup> and its specific features which differentiate it from all the other partes orationis <sup>(3)</sup>. In the hands of the Modistae, grammar becomes the expression of the species and fundamental kinds found in the world of reality; a species is made up of the general type (genus) and specific difference <sup>(4)</sup> - the type

(1) Michel de Marbais: ipsae partes distinguuntur per suos modos significandi quibus in specie partis reponuntur. (Quoted by Wallerand, p. 48).

(2) The nomen and pronomen share the essence of 'modus entis', cf. 5.111 and 5.114; the verbum and the participium the 'modus esse' cf. 5.112 and 5.113, and the indeclinable the 'modus disponibilis'.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: modus significandi specificus est modus significandi qui additus modo significandi generali constituit speciem. This is one matter of organisation on which Siger and Thomas differ: we shall see that Thomas's modus generalissimus contains the same subject matter as Siger's modus generalis and specificus, but Siger's division is done deliberately to set off the similarity of the pars with other partes and the individuality of the pars in question. The difference in their presentation is seen most clearly in the indeclinable partes, when Thomas's modus generalissimus is the equivalent of Siger's modus specificus only, and Siger's modus generalis, i.e. modus disponibilis which he states as the unifying factor between the indeclinables, is not mentioned at all by Thomas.

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: sicut ad constitutionem speciei concurrunt genus et differentia specifica, sic ad constitutionem partis concurrunt modus significandi generalis et specificus.



being represented by a general significative function which can be found in more than one pars (1), and it is this which has to acquire a specific determination for a pars to be created (2). There are certain metaphysical implications here; every material element demands matter and form (3) which constitute its essence or nature, but acquires accidental modalities (4), particularly of quality and quantity. Similarly, each pars consists of its essential constituents, i.e. its essential modes of signifying, and similarly its accidents, or more correctly, its accidental modes of signifying. The latter is a somewhat superfluous statement, since, as Wallerand points out (5), in his introductory essay, if we are to obtain a real definition and not merely a description, the essence of a pars orationis can be defined only by the type to which it belongs and its specific difference, i.e. by its general and specific essential modes of signifying (6).

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- (1) The same theories are presented by Thomas but are ordered and expressed differently; he uses the *modus generalissimus* to state the feature that the pars shares with other partes - (this will be the general type), and also the features by reason of which it is distinct from all the other partes orationis; cf. his definition of the essential mode, 20: *modus significandi essentialis est per quem pars orationis habet simpliciter esse, vel secundum genus, vel secundum speciem*. Modistic descriptive procedure has been described in greater detail in Chapter IV (cf. 4.2, 4.244).
  - (2) I suggest that this makes the rationale of Martin of Dacia's ordering his material in the sequence of the *modus essentialis* of all the partes, then the *modus specialis* of all the partes, etc. more understandable.
  - (3) cf. pp. 71-77
  - (4) G. Wallerand, *Op.cit.* p.(48).
  - (5) G. Wallerand, *Op.cit.* p.(48).
  - (6) This is in contrast to the methods of antiquity where the different partes orationis were definable, in part, by the "accidents" applicable to them; for this reason, it must be realised that accident and accidental mode are not by any means the same thing, cf. p.62:70-1.



There are two elements above all which the grammarian must express, i.e. those of stability and becoming. The partes which express the element of stability or permanence are the nomen and the pronomen, while becoming is expressed by the verbum and the participium. (One of the weaknesses of the method of the Modistae can be seen in their treatment of the indeclinable partes, which, they say, do not belong to the essence of the language but merely serve to render language more adequate (1) - they are, however, not alone in this (2)). The specific difference serves to distinguish the nomen from the pronomen, and the verbum from the participium (3).

The Modistae followed Donatus in their classification of the partes orationis; Roos tells us (4), that Martin of Dacia describes (5) first of all the essential modes of all eight partes, then their special modes (and in the case

- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.144: non sunt de esse orationis sed de bene esse. cf. also G. Wallerand, Op.cit.pp. (49),(55).
- (2) L. Tesnière, Esquisse d'une grammaire structurale, p.7.
- (3) Reference was made in the previous chapter, cf. 4.4 to the idea of an 'archipars' implicit in Siger's modus generalis, and the modus specificus serves to differentiate members of the same 'archipars'.
- (4) H. Roos, Martinus de Dacia und seine Schrift "De Modis Significandi". Classica et Mediaevalia, viii (1946)pp.111-112
- (5) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p.140-1.



of Martin of Dacia 'specialis' must be considered the equivalent of Thomas's 'subalternus' and 'specialissimus'), and then the six accidental modes <sup>(1)</sup>. After this detailed review of the partes orationis, the grammarian would then examine them in terms of their syntax, <sup>(2)</sup>. This would not seem to be absolutely true of all the Modistae: Thomas varies slightly from Martin <sup>(3)</sup>, whereas Siger is in many ways quite different from either Thomas or Martin, e.g. he describes each pars orationis in terms of its equal subdivisions of its essential mode before proceeding to the accidental modes, which he certainly does not restrict to six! <sup>(4)</sup>

The Nomen and Pronomen signify substance, i.e. the stability and permanence of things; this they have in common and this thus constitutes their general feature. Their specific difference represents a qualitative determination, because it is quality or form which distinguishes one thing from another - in the case of the Nomen it is the ability to designate precisely and distinctively, whereas the

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- (1) Martin uses six accidental modes of the nomen and verbum, in contrast to Thomas, who uses six for the nomen but eight for the verbum, and Siger uses nine for the nomen and eight for the verb.
  - (2) Martin of Dacia: principium efficiens constructionis et aliarum passionum sermonis.
  - (3) cf. p. 26: 210-11: 503.
  - (4) Siger has nine accidental modes of the Nomen and eight of the Verbum.



Pronomen does not possess this, and does not represent any stable element, in the same way that prime matter is only the potential subject of any form. Siger has likened the function of the pronomen in grammar to that of prime matter in substance (1).

The Nomen has as its meaning function the mode of the static, rest and determined understanding which it expresses by means of the mode of being (modus entis) in contrast to the Verbum which signifies by means of the mode of becoming (modus esse). The Nomen, therefore, expresses a static moment to the exclusion of all time connection which is a characteristic of the Verbum. The contrast between the Nomen and Pronomen is not one of time or becoming, but one of determined understanding (modus apprehensionis determinatae).

The Pronomen signifies by means of the mode of state and inaction as is the case with the Nomen, but also by means of indeterminate understanding which differentiates them. "Das Pronomen weist auf einem Gegenstand als Gegenstand hin ... (dieser Gegenstand ist) nicht inhaltlich bestimmt... als dieser und kein anderer. Die

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.125: pronomen substantiam solum non etiam qualitatem significat, ita quod consimili modo imaginandum in pronomine sicut in materia prima.



Bedeutungsfunktion des Pronomens kann daher mit Recht unbestimmt, besser nicht bestimmend genannt werden" (1).

The verb and participle express the feature of becoming; Siger tells us (2) that the universal order of things requires, in any multitude, the presence of an element from which all direction is derived and towards which everything converges; a similar state of affairs exists in grammar (3) in which several partes orationis seem to have to be governed by the verbum which, however, is not governed (4) by any other pars. This is a general feature common to the Verbum and Participium, i.e. the mode of signifying which embraces movement and becoming. Everything which is permanent derives

- (1) M. Heidegger, Die Kategorien und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus, p. 1916), p. 199.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p. 139: in genere entium est devenire ad aliquod primum dignissimum et nobilissimum quod omnia entia regit .. in omni multitudine aliquod unum regimen invenitur.
- (3) Siger de Courtrai, p. 139-40: regimen in entibus grammaticalibus debet sumi ad similitudinem regiminis veri.. ad similitudinem huius sumitur regimen inter partes orationis, ita quod est devenire ad aliquam partem orationis dignissimam respectu talis multitudinis, quia multitudinem et orationem complet, quae proprie regit omnes alias partes et a nulla alia regitur, videlicet verbum.
- (4) 'Governed' is used here in the traditional sense of the term, i.e. the influence of one word over another in determining the case of a noun or pronoun or the mood of a verb, in contrast to the much narrower use of the term current among some linguists today, e.g. C.F. Hockett, A Course in Modern Linguistics, p. 216.



from the substance, while everything which changes derives from an action or passion, from some movement. This becoming can be expressed in so far as it can be attributed to a subject - this is their special feature and serves to differentiate the Verbum and Participium, for the Verbum separates the action from the subject which produces it, while the Participium signifies the action in so far as it is joined to the subject <sup>(1)</sup>, what Siger called a mixture of action and potentiality. <sup>(2)</sup>

The Verbum thus signifies by means of the mode of movement and becoming (modus esse et fieri), and of separation from the substance (modus distantis a substantia). Whereas the Nomen represents an essentially static element, the mode of becoming is a dynamic element with time as the characteristic of the Verbum, i.e. Zeitwort! This mode of becoming is not sufficient, however, to differentiate the verbum from all the other partes orationis, since this feature, this general mode, is shared by the Participium; the feature which differentiates the verbum from all other grammatical word-classes is the mode of separation (modus distantis).

The Participium signifies by means of the general mode of becoming which it shares with the verbum and also by means of the special mode of non-separation from the substance

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(1) G. Wallerand, Op.cit. p.52.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.123: de actu permixto potentiae.



(modus indistantis a substantia). "Beim Partizipium ruht der Akzent seiner Bedeutung nicht so sehr auf der Zugehörigkeit des Sachverhaltes zum Gegenstand, als vielmehr auf dem mit dem Gegenstand vereinigt gedachten Sachverhalt" (1).

The accidental modes of these four declinable partes orationis follow and express variations of the essence of each pars orationis, some of which being derived from the form (2) and others from the matter (2): this has an important influence on their syntactic function, inasmuch as some of these modes will be absolute (and therefore non-syntactic) and some will be respective and therefore constructible with other partes orationis (3).

The indeclinable partes are then analysed and described in a similar manner; in Siger's scheme all the indeclinable

(1) M. Heidegger, *Op.cit.* p. 219.

(2) cf. pp. 71-77 for discussions of these technical terms.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p. 131: modi significandi absoluti dicuntur qui non conceduntur dictioni in comparatione ad modum significandi alterius dictionis sed magis ut vox mediantibus illis designet talem modum essendi circa rem. Isti modi significandi non sunt principium constructionis quia non sunt principium unionis dictionis cum dictione. Thomas of Erfurt, #2: modus significandi accidentalis absolutus dicitur ille, per quem unum constructibile non habet respectum ad alterum, sed solum ad rei proprietatem. Siger de Courtrai, p. 131: modi significandi respectivi dicuntur qui conceduntur dictioni in comparatione ad modum significandi alterius dictionis eis proportionalem et tales sunt principium constructionis quia sunt principium unionis constructibilis cum constructibile. Thomas of Erfurt, #2: modus significandi accidentalis respectivus est, per quem unum constructibile habet respectum non solum ad rei proprietatem, sed etiam per quem unum constructibile habet respectum ad alterum.



partes have the same general mode in common, that of signifying the disposition of the 'ens' or the act (per modum disponentis), and are differentiated by the special mode, which is very similar in effect to Thomas's essential mode. The Adverbium marks a special determination which qualifies principally the act, and which therefore brings the Adverbium close to the Verbum. The Coniunctio derives its raison d'être from the fact that certain beings are unifiable: the Modistae distinguished between two types of Coniunctio, i.e. coniunctio per vim and coniunctio per ordinem, the former acting as the link between two unifiable groups which do not require a particular link, and the latter serves to join up two groups which do require a particular link. The Praepositio is used to signify the relationships between certain properties, i.e. the cases, of the substantive element and the act, i.e. the verb to which they are linked; they may indicate an action in process or the limit of the action, but this fact of linking substance to the action introduces higher correlative structures than those merely of stability or becoming. The Interiectio is used to signify various states of mind as apprehended by the intellect; it is close to the Verbum, since such emotional states will be caused by the feature of movement or as Heidegger says (1):

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(1) M. Heidegger, Op.cit. p.226.



"Die Interjektion hat eine Beziehung zu den emotionalen Erlebnissen, sie determiniert nicht den Bedeutungsgehalt der Verba als solchen (wie die Adverbia); ihre determinierende Funktion geht auf die Beziehung der verbalen. Bedeutungsakte zum Bewusstsein."

Wallerand argues <sup>(1)</sup> that the indeclinable partes cannot possess those properties which can be found in the declinable partes, and refers to Aristotle for authority, that a more noble and more perfect form implies more elevated and more numerous operations - the vegetable aspires only to vegetative operations, the animal adds sensory acts, but man can reach up to higher intellectual operations. So it is with the partes orationis; the indeclinable partes can have only rudimentary modalities because the embrace of their meaning is inferior to that of the declinable partes. It is, of course, foolhardy to base any grammatical statement on such criteria, and would be totally unacceptable to modern thinking. However, granted all limitations of a grammatical statement based on theories of meaning and despite the criticisms which can be made of his theory, it is reasonable to maintain that, of all the Modistae, Siger came closest to constructing a satisfactory grammatical statement by means of his *modus entis*, *modus esse* and *modus disponentis* <sup>(2)</sup>; at

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(1) G. Wallerand, Op.cit. p. (55).

(2) These are the characteristic features of the three 'archipartes' cf. p. 141.



least this is based in part on syntactic criteria rather than on vague notions of higher and lower meaning (1).

Wallerand also tells us (2) that the Modistae did not agree on the order or sequence of the partes orationis; for Siger, this order is essential (3) since one pars either presupposes another or else is engendered from another pars, which explains, of course, the close links in his system between the Nomen and pronomen, and the Verbum and Participium. Michel de Marbais, according to Wallerand (4), maintained the rigorous independence of the partes orationis in the same way that one finds a similar independence between

(1) cf. Bloomfield's statement about the word-classes in Tagalog, cf. L. Bloomfield, Language, p.200.

(2) G. Wallerand, Op.cit. p. (55).

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: verbum sequitur immediate ipsum nomen, quia proprium sequitur immediate illud cuius est proprium, ubi apparet in verbis. Nunc esse est proprius actus ipsius entis; cum nomen significat rem suam per modum substantiae seu entis, et verbum per modum significandi fieri, seu esse verbum immediate debet sequi ipsum nomen.  
Siger de Courtrai, p.123: participium sequitur immediate nomen et verbum quia solum ab eis partem capit.  
Siger's order of presentation is: nomen, verbum, participium, pronomen, adverbium, coniunctio, praepositio, interiectio; in contrast, Thomas's presentation follows this order: nomen, pronomen, verbum, adverbium, participium, coniunctio, praepositio, interiectio.

(4) G. Wallerand, Op.cit. p.55.



the various species of the world of reality. Thomas of Erfurt and Martin of Dacia follow a similar order, which, however, differs from Siger's slightly; this suggests that they too were not concerned about the inter-relationship of the partes, especially the declinable partes.

Thomas's division of 'Etymologia' and 'Diasynthetica' has been followed in presenting the theory of the partes orationis and then a description of syntactic theory, but Siger's division of the partes into declinable and indeclinable has been maintained in describing the individual partes, and also his sequence of the partes, viz. Nomen, Verbum, Participium, Pronomen, Adverbium, Coniunctio, Praepositio and Interiectio. These will be analysed and described in this order in detail before a consideration of Modistic theories on syntax.

### 5.1 Etymologia.

Prior to the 13th century and also in the early 13th century grammars were as a rule divided into four



parts (1) i.e. Orthographia, the science of letters and syllables, Etymologia, the science of the word and its meanings, Diasynthetica, the science of the sentence and its constructions, and Prosodia, the science of pronunciation.

By the 13th century 'Etymologia' had come to mean everything that was relative to the declensions and conjugations of the different partes orationis and the formation of words. Thurot quotes (2) John of Genoa, e.g. "Sub ista

- 1) H. Roos, Op. cit. p. 138: "Die so definierte Wissenschaft der Grammatik teilte man im Mittelalter im Anschluss an die 'Institutiones' des Priscian in vier Teile ein." Roos quotes an extract from Peter Helias also quoted by Thurot, p.132: partes huius artis sunt quatuor: quarum nomina quoniam non habemus, dicatur prima pars scientia de litteris, secunda de sillabis, tertia de dictionibus, quarta de oratione.

Priscian and Donatus did not ~~use this division~~ <sup>use the terms 'etymologia', etc.</sup> In Donatus, we find only 'vox, littera, syllaba' which really can be considered in this connection and these only in his larger Ars Grammatica. Priscian included 'vox, littera' in Book I and 'syllaba, dictio, oratio' in Book II.

Roos states that there seems to have been a tendency to reduce this to three parts, i.e. orthographia, prosodia and diasynthetica and quotes an extract from the "Graecismus" also quoted by Thurot, p.132: "Ortho. proso. syasin. species tres grammaticae sunt" - i.e. the sillaba, littera and dictio have all been included in the category of 'orthographia'. This tripartite division does not seem to have been general, and by the early 13th century, the names of orthographia, ethimologia, diasynthetica and prosodia were still in use. Thurot, pp.146 and 212 explains the variant forms of ethimologia and diasynthetica.

- 2) Ch. Thurot, Op. cit. p.147.,fn.1.



(ethimologia) comprehenduntur octo partes orationis et earum accidentia"; Thurot added that the study of their meaning was not excluded (1). In other words, the innovations brought by the Modistae to grammatical tradition~~a~~ refer principally to the definitions of the partes orationis and their accidents, and much less to the origin of their meanings.

The Modistae used two of the traditional divisions of grammar, i.e. etymologia and diasynthetica. It must be pointed out that Siger does not use these terms at all and the incompleteness of his treatise makes it impossible to say with any certainty that he would have made use of such a division. At the end of his section on the nomen, there is a suggestion that he had in mind a separate section on syntax, but on the other hand his use of the theory of 'principium constructionis' suggests an even greater interpenetration of these two levels than would seem likely if he had followed the more traditional pattern of Thomas's or Martin's method (2), though there is a very great degree of interpenetration in Thomas's syntactic theory (3).

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(1) Cf. Thurot, Op.cit. p.147: Au 13e siècle l'ethimologia comprend tout ce qui est relatif aux déclinaisons, aux conjugaisons et à la formation des mots... mais n'exclut pas l'étude de leur signification.

(2) cf. Roos (Op.cit. pp.139-40) argues that the Modistic division of 'etymologia' and 'diasynthetica' became the model for the division of morphology and syntax which has characterised grammatical description of the normative type down to the present, and by the very rigidity of its divisions became one of the salient features of the grammatical methods of the neo-grammarians.

(3) cf. p.169-70: 299:326:347-8:575, *fol.* 5.



Roos tells us (1) that the Modistae presented their material according to the following pattern, (i) the modus significandi essentialis of each pars orationis, (ii) the modus significandi specialis (2) and (iii) the modus significandi accidentalis of the various partes orationis. This procedure of modus significandi essentialis, specialis and accidentalis is in <sup>Martin</sup>~~Siger~~ and Thomas to a large extent the same, but Thomas describes and analyses each pars orationis in turn, beginning with the modus essentialis and proceeding via the modus subalternus and modus specialissimus to the modus accidentalis, whereas Siger and Michel de Marbais deal with each pars separately, though of course their analytical procedure is not quite the same, since they describe each pars in terms of the two equal sub-divisions of the modus essentialis, i.e. generalis and specialis or specificus, before dealing with the modus accidentalis.

Thomas divisions of etymologia, in which he deals with the partes orationis 'an und für sich', and diasynthetica have been followed, since this will facilitate the examination

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(1) H. Roos, Op.cit. p. 140

(2) The use of 'specialis' in Martin's descriptive scheme is not the same as Siger's use of 'specialis', since Siger's specialis is an equal member along with 'generalis' of the essential mode; Martin's modus specialis is much closer to Thomas's modus subalternus and specialissimus.



of Modistic theory of the partes orationis, which is the subject matter of this thesis, before considering the syntax of these partes orationis.

#### 5.11 The declinable partes orationis (1)

The Modistae stated quite categorically that the indeclinable partes had fewer modes of signifying, which is the Modistic way of saying that they had fewer formal features, than the declinable partes, since the meaning of such indeclinable partes rested on fewer properties, or modes of being than the declinable partes (2).

Siger made more of this than the other Modistae seem to have done, and divided the eight partes into two groups, which he called 'magis principales' (3) and 'minus principales' (4).

(1) Appendix D, pp. 663-6 sets out in diagram form the partes orationis, the essence they share, and the quality of the essence by which they are distinguished: this Appendix also contains in more detailed diagrams the declinable and indeclinable partes, and also the modus entis and its sub-modes as they are used in the nomen and pronomen.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #183: partes indeclinabiles, non tot modos significandi habent, quot partes declinabiles, quia significatum partium indeclinabilium paucis subsistit proprietatibus, sed significatio partium declinabilium multis: ideo pauciores sunt modi significandi partibus indeclinabilibus, quam declinabilibus.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.144: partes quae significant per modum entis et esse sunt principales magis et declinabiles.

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p.144: aliae partes orationis sunt minus principales quia modi significandi ipsarum sumuntur a proprietatibus minus principalibus, et sunt indeclinabiles quia carent illis accidentibus penes quae attenditur declinatio.



This further sub-division has been used in the description of the partes orationis, so that we find grouped together, (i) those partes magis principales, i.e. the declinable partes which in fact share the features of 'ens' and of 'esse' and (ii) those partes minus principales, i.e. the indeclinable partes, which do not possess 'ens' or 'esse' and which do not really 'belong' in any essential form but render the sentence more adequate as an expression of 'oratio congrua'.

#### 5.111 Nomen.

Priscian and Donatus, in their definitions of the nomen, had insisted on the features of substance and quality along with case as the vital attributes of the Nomen. The 12th Century had continued to accept Priscian's definition that the characteristic sign of the nomen was to signify substance and quality <sup>(1)</sup>, a definition which Peter Helias was content to repeat. This definition produced a number of problems which show the fundamental weakness of a semantic approach to grammatical definition; what, for instance, is the substance and what is the quality signified by 'quis', 'omnis', 'nullus'?

In the 13th Century, the grammarians felt the need to clarify and mark the opposition between the modes of signifying of the Nomen and Verbum, since there tended to be

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(1) Priscian; Proprium est nominis substantiam et qualitatem significare.



some confusion between the application of the terms 'substance' and 'existence' which had arisen as a result of Priscian's use of the term 'verbum substantivum' (1). As a result, the idea of permanence and repose was substituted for substance, and determined understanding (apprehensio determinata) for quality; similarly the idea of change and becoming (fieri) replaced action and passion as the characteristic feature of the Verbum.

The Modistae came to accept, by and large, the 'permanent' conception of the Nomen in place of the traditional 'substantial' one as its definition; indeed they were almost compelled to do so, since, as Michel de Marbais points out, not every nomen will signify true substance as in the case of 'privatio', 'figmentum', and 'negatio', and he asks, what is the quality of 'Deus' or 'materia'? As it was, it required all their ingenuity to incorporate such terms into their nominal system; it also underscores a serious flaw in the Modistic, or for that matter, any grammatical system, which is based on meaning for its criteria.

It must not be imagined that the Modistae dismissed substance altogether from their definition of the nomen; it seems almost as if they were not satisfied with substance and quality as a definition and relegated them, so to speak,

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(1) cf. 5.112.



to be items in the description of the essential mode of the nomen. It also provides an interesting example of independent thinking within a general body of doctrine, since none of the Modistae agree in detail about the organisation and presentation of the nomen, though they do agree in general terms about their grammatical doctrine with reference to the nomen.

The Modistae, with the exception of Michel de Marbais, introduce the concept of 'ens' into their discussion of the nomen and similarly 'esse' into the verbum in order to contrast with 'ens'. Thomas tells us that the modus entis is the mode of permanency and repose inherent in the thing and this is how Martin of Dacia defined the nomen <sup>(1)</sup>, though he refers to the modus entis as an operative contrast to the modus esse of the verbum. Both Siger and Michel retain the idea of substance in their concept of the nomen, though in the case of Siger he gives it as a feature of the general mode of the nomen. Of the Modistae, Michel is closer than the others to the older (more classical) definition of the nomen as the pars orationis which signifies the thing by means of the mode of determined substance <sup>(2)</sup>. Siger takes up a mid-way point, in that he retains the idea of substance, but introduces the idea of permanency, rest and 'ens' in his general mode and also introduces determined understanding

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(1) Martin of Dacia: Modus habitus et quietis et determinatae apprehensionis.

(2) Michel de Marbais: Nomen est pars orationis significans rem suam per modum substantie determinate. (Quoted by Thurot, p. 164 ).



into his specific mode as well as retaining qualitas as one of its features <sup>(1)</sup>. Thomas is the furthest from the traditional definition; he refers to this older definition of 'substantia cum qualitate' explaining that substance is the modus entis which is derived from the property of the thing which is the mode of permanency and repose and which is found principally in substance; he also explains that quality is the mode of determined understanding derived from the property of form and quality. The nomen is thus, for Thomas, the pars orationis which signifies by means of the modus entis or the mode of determined understanding <sup>(2)</sup>.

One can almost sense in both Thomas and Siger a need to substitute the modus entis for the modus substantiae, in order to solve the problem of 'negatio', 'privatio', etc.; both of them answer the possible objection to 'negatio', etc. as belonging to nomina by reference to Aristotle <sup>(3)</sup>. It would seem difficult however to sustain the argument that 'figmentum' was a nomen by virtue of its possessing a mode of

- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.95-6. modus significandi essentialis generalis nominis est modus significandi substantiae, permanentis habitus seu entis..modus significandi specialis est modus qualitatis seu distinctae apprehensionis a quolibet alio.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #25: Nomen est pars orationis significans per modum entis, vel determinatae apprehensionis.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #26: licet privationes et negationes non sint entia positiva extra animam posita; sunt tamen entia positiva secundum animam, ut patet ex intentione Philosophi IV Met. text 9, ubi dicit quod opiniones contrariae, hoc est, duo contradictoria extra animam sunt duo contraria secundum animam.



substance as its essential feature.

Thus we find a state of affairs in which the Modistae did not agree entirely on the detailed analysis and description of the nomen, though there is a large measure of agreement on its essential general nature. Martin of Dacia and Thomas insist more on the contrast of its modus entis to the modus esse of the verbum; Siger and Michel de Marbais refer to the 'substantial' nature of the nomen, though Siger modifies his substantial statement by insisting also on the nature and function of 'ens'; none of them can accept this as a literal fact, since 'privationes' etc. cannot obviously refer to anything substantial. This, apart from anything else, reveals a weakness in their theory which a formal grammatical statement would always avoid.

#### 5.1111 Modus significandi essentialis nominis.

The preceding chapter attempted to show how Siger and Thomas differed in their presentation of their material, although the subject-matter and content of their material remained essentially the same. All this becomes abundantly clear in their description of the essential mode of signifying of the nomen, though there are apparent divergencies in their description caused by their different presentation which must be clarified before we can link them up into a unified statement.



The Modistae follow much more closely the tradition of Plato and Aristotle than Priscian in that they lay great stress on the two principal parts of speech, i.e. nomen and verbum <sup>(1)</sup>: but whereas the Greeks appear to have established these parts on purely logical grounds, the Modistae based their distinction on the metaphysical criteria of reality, which is entirely in keeping with their philosophical background. Thomas tells us that we can discover certain common properties or modi essendi, e.g. modus entis and modus esse, and this enables us to establish from which property of the thing a particular modus significandi is derived. The modus entis is the mode of permanence inherent in the thing from which it derives being; the modus esse is the mode of flux and sequence inherent in the thing from which it derives becoming <sup>(2)</sup>. The modus entis will be therefore the modus generalissimus of the nomen and the modus esse will be the modus generalissimus of the verbum <sup>(3)</sup>. Thomas refers to Aristotle for authority <sup>(4)</sup> that there are principally two modi entium, i.e. modus entis and modus esse, from which the two principal partes orationis, i.e. nomen and verbum are

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(1) R.H. Robins, A.&M., p.18.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #24: modus entis est modus habitus et permanentis, rei inhaerens, ex hoc quod habet esse. Modus esse est modus fluxus et successionis, rei inhaerens, ex hoc quod habet fieri.

(3) The modus generalissimus is used by Thomas to describe the essence of the pars and the characteristic of the essence by means of which the pars is distinguished from all other partes.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #24: ad hanc intentionem Commentator IV Phys.cap.14, dicit quod duo sunt modi principaliter entium, scilicet modus entis, et modus esse, a quibus sumpserunt Grammatici duas partes orationes principales, scilicet nomen et verbum.



derived. Thomas adds that the pronomen is here implied by the nomen, and the participium by the verbum.

The Modistae were almost hoist with their own petard. Their metaphysics of reality and the traditional definition of the nomen had left them with the problem of dealing with such things as fictions (figmenta), negations (negationes) and absences (privationes) e.g. nihil, caecitas, since they obviously cannot refer to anything possessing being (1), nor can they be called nomina by having recourse to the 'proprietas rei'. Again the Modistae had recourse to Aristotle (2), that these may not refer to entia outside the mind, but they are entia according to the mind, which can be justified in scholastic terms, i.e. that two terms containing a contradiction outside the mind are antithetic according to the mind. Since the<sup>sc</sup> negations and absences are entia in terms of the mind, or as Siger says (3), anything which can be grasped by the mind, they possess therefore the property of permanence which is an attribute of the modus generalissimus of the nomen.

(1) Negation is however only a way of stating a positive fact.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p. 95: accipiendo ens secundum rationem eius maxime universalem, scilicet, ad ens in anima et extra animam et ad omne id quod mente potest capi: sive sit privatio, sive negatio sive purum figmentum, aliquod est ens, ut vult Aristoteles, IV Metaphysicae.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.95: omne id quod mente potest capi.



Siger is quite straightforward; he describes the general mode and then proceeds to the specific mode, using the general mode to state the essence of the pars in question which it shares with other partes orationis, e.g. the nomen and pronomen share the same modus generalis, i.e. modus entis, and the specific mode to state the particular essence of the pars by reason of which it can be distinguished from all the partes orationis - this binary opposition of generalis and specificus is clearly, though he himself does not say so unequivocally, exploiting the contrast of matter and form (to which reference has been made and will be frequently<sup>made</sup>), which was a characteristic device in Modistic grammatical procedures. His description of these essential modes is very succinct, and he prefers to dwell in much more detail on the accidental modes. Thomas begins with the modus generalissimus, proceeds to the modus subalternus (which he describes in great detail) and then to the modus specialissimus, which he also describes in very great detail. The very wealth of his description throws considerable light on his descriptive technique; his modus subalternus takes from the modus generalissimus and details aspects of the essential nature of the pars in question, which he calls modi significandi essentiales subalterni generales, which he describes in turn as modi subalterni minus generales; these are then refined as modi specialissimi of the



modi subalterni: Appendix D shows in detail the sequence from the *modus generalissimus* to the ultimate refinement of the *modus specialissimus*. The term 'sequence' is used quite deliberately with reference to Thomas, since Siger's technique suggests no such sequence.

We would see, then, that Siger's *modus essentialis generalis* and *specificus* really are the equivalent of Thomas's *modus essentialis generalissimus*, while Thomas's *modus subalternus* and *specialissimus* consist of refinements which are for the most part absent from Siger. Differences of detail within the corpus (though they are more apparent than real) do not really have a place at this stage of the exposition, since the aim is to describe and clarify the theory of the *Modistae* as a whole <sup>(1)</sup>. For this reason, then, matters such as the fact that Thomas describes the division of 'substantivum' and 'adiectivum' as part of the *modus essentialis* while Siger includes them in the accidental modes will not be discussed here <sup>(2)</sup>.

It will be remembered <sup>(3)</sup> that Siger uses his general essential mode to describe that particular *modus significandi* which refers to the essence of more than one *pars orationis*, so that in the case of the *nomen* it is the mode of signifying substance, permanency, rest and the state of being <sup>(4)</sup>, which

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(1) cf. Appendix A.

(2) cf. p. 227 *et seq.*

(3) cf. p. 184.

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p. 95: *modus significandi essentialis generalis nominis est modus significandi substantiae, permanentis habitus seu entis.*



is very similar to Michel de Marbais's general mode (1). It is the essential mode since it refers to the essence of the pars in question, and it is the general mode since it refers to the essence of more than one pars - in the case of the nomen it shares the attributes of substance, permanency and repose with the pronomen. The *modus specificus* is used by Siger to distinguish a particular pars from all the others; in the case of the nomen, the feature of this mode is that of quality (*qualitas*) or the mode of distinct understanding (2) which serves to distinguish the nomen from the pronomen which, as we shall see, has as its *modus specificus*, that of non-distinct understanding in opposition to the specific mode of the nomen. If we look at Thomas's *modus generalissimus*, we would see that this mode is one of being and distinct understanding (3); there is no mention of substance but there is otherwise little difference between Thomas and Siger. Thomas adds that the *modus entis* possesses an attribute of matter which creates the bond between the nomen and pronomen, whereas the *modus determinatae apprehensionis* possesses the attribute of form which renders the nomen discrete from all the other *partes orationis*. Thomas's *modus*

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(1) Michel de Marbais: *modus significandi substantie sive quietis vel habitus sive permanentis*. (Quoted by Thurot, p. 160 ).

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: *modus qualitatis seu distinctae apprehensionis a quolibet alio*.

Michel de Marbais: *modus significandi qualitatis sive determinati sive distincti*. (Quoted by Thurot, p. 160 ).

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #23: *modus significandi per modum entis, et determinatae apprehensionis*.



generalissimus fulfils the function of Siger's modus generalis and modus specificus.

Thomas avoids the use of the term 'substantia' in his definition of the nomen, though he does refer to the 'ancient' grammarians who had said that the nomen signifies substance with quality (i.e. Priscian), the implication being that the modus substantiae is equivalent to the modus entis, and qualitas can be equated to 'distincta apprehensio' (1); the latter, as Thomas tells us, is acquired from the property of the form, and quality is the property of determination, because the form determines and distinguishes the different meanings. It seems that Thomas deliberately avoided the use of the term 'substantia', since this term implies a combination of substantial form and matter, and in combination only substance can exist (2); this would therefore exclude absences and negations from the category of nomen. Thomas insists on the dual nature of the modus generalissimus, i.e. the modus entis which is the attribute of matter and the modus determinatae apprehensionis which is the attribute of form; the nomen and pronomen possess the same modus entis

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- (1) As Siger in fact does: p.96: modus significandi specialis est modus qualitatis seu distinctae apprehensionis a quolibet alio, quia qualitatis seu formae est distinguere.
- (2) F.C. Copleston, Aquinas, p.87: every material thing or substance is composed of a substantial form and first matter. Neither principle is in itself a thing or substance; the two together are the component principles of a substance.



but are distinguished by the form which would not have been possible if substance alone had been the feature of the nomen, since it would not then have been possible to distinguish the nomen from the pronomen.

We see then that Siger with his *modus generalis* and *specificus* achieves the same result as Thomas does with his *modus generalissimus*. However, as was pointed out in the preceding chapter, all Siger's essential and accidental modes are either absolute or respective, whereas Thomas applies this latter dichotomy to his accidental modes only. Siger's *modus generalis* is a respective mode and his *modus specificus* an absolute mode - this is certainly true of the declinable partes <sup>(1)</sup>; the *modus generalis* therefore is used to portray those partes orationis which have the same syntactic function separately from those which have not, and the *modus specificus* is used to distinguish the particular pars from all the others by means of mainly morpho-semantic criteria; at this stage, however, Thomas is not concerned at all with such a distinction <sup>(2)</sup>. Siger has no separate section on syntax and therefore each mode of signifying is qualified, i.e. whether it is a '*principium constructionis*' or not - the term '*principium constructionis*'

(1) cf. p. 167.

(2) Thomas says quite clearly (<sup>#</sup>22), that the modi significandi will be considered firstly, purely and simply in terms of the partes orationis, and then in terms of their construction with other partes orationis.



being taken to imply that the particular mode in question will have a grammatical function at a level higher than the word. Siger's interpretation of 'constructio' is very close to Priscian's (1), i.e. a two-term proposition of the nomen and verbum; Peter Helias had introduced the logical terms of subject (suppositum) and predicate (appositum) into grammar which must have suggested to Siger and Thomas a type of construction which Bloomfield has called the 'actor-action' type. This S P construction goes back to antiquity and constitutes one of favourite sentence types of Latin. This type of construction plays a very great part in Modistic syntactic theory, and it is revealing to see to what extent the Modistae (and they are not alone in this) were unconsciously dominated even in creating formalised logical statements and syllogisms, not to mention the fact that they constructed their syntactic theory round sentences of the N V and V N type, by the structure of the Latin sentence. The nomen and pronomen have the same modus generalis which is the principium constructionis of the suppositum and which we can call the 'subject' element in contrast to the verbum and participium which have the same modus generalis and which is the principium constructionis of the appositum which we can call

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- (1) Priscian, XVII, 13: si tollas nomen aut verbum,  
imperfecta fit oratio.  
Priscian, XVII, 14: si tollas nomen aut verbum,  
deficiet oratio.



The 'predicate' element. The nomen and pronomen, in these terms, do not have separate syntactic function; it becomes therefore the function of the modus specificus in Siger's scheme to distinguish these two partes (1); this device is of no concern to Thomas who accordingly combines that feature of the nomen which it possesses in common with the pronomen and that feature which distinguishes it from the pronomen into the one modus generalissimus (2).

Modus significandi essentialis subalternus Nominis.

The modus subalternus and its various sub-modes are refinements of the nomen and represent a detailed inventory of the different kinds of word which can be included, in Modistic terms, under the general title of nomen. Consideration of the whole essential mode can be divided into two distinct parts; the first seeks to define the nature of the pars in question, the second to describe its morphosemantic (3) content; the accidental mode, which will be

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- (1) This is Siger's method of presentation.
  - (2) The modus generalissimus of the nomen is defined by means of the two terms 'modus entis' and 'determinata apprehensio' and the modus generalissimus of the pronomen by means of the two terms 'modus entis' and 'indeterminata apprehensio', so that we can see the nomen and pronomen have the 'modus entis' in common and are distinguished by the 'apprehensio' which is 'determinata' in the nomen but 'indeterminata' in the pronomen. This feature has been discussed in some detail, cf. 311, as an excellent instance of Thomas's use of the matter-form contrast to distinguish two partes orationis, i.e. the nomen and pronomen have the same matter, but do not have the same form
  - (3) The term 'morpho-semantic' used here is intended to express the idea of morphology expressed in semantic terms: the term 'morpho-semantic' should in this context not be understood in the same sense as Professor P. Guiraud, (Les champs morpho-sémantiques, BSLP lII (1956), 265-88) and Professor S. Ullmann (The Principles of Semantics, p.313) have used it, i.e. to express sound-and-sense associations.



considered shortly, consists of attributes of the pars which are derived from without its essence. The question is what does an accidental mode consist of, because on this point there is some disagreement between Siger and Thomas. It must be pointed out once more that this does not constitute a difference of doctrine but rather one of organisation and exposition, since in the end what Siger and Thomas have to say about, e.g. the substantivum, largely agrees, despite the fact that for the former it is an accidental mode and for the latter a *modus subalternus*. This fact is mentioned deliberately, since this divergence of exposition makes for a problem in the presentation of the material; for the sake of unity, i.e. in order to show that there is a unified grammatical doctrine, Siger's accidental mode of 'qualitas' (which Thomas does not consider to be a true accidental mode)<sup>(1)</sup> has been introduced at this stage alongside the *modus subalternus* of the *nomen* (which is a mode peculiar to Thomas).

There are two modes which must be considered under the *modus subalternus*, i.e. the *modus communis* and the *modus*

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #28: *qualitas, quam assignat Donatus pro accidente nominis, dividens eam in qualitatem propriam et appellativam, nominat duos modos essentielles nominis subalternos, scilicet modum communis, et appropriati... quae dicuntur accidere nomini, quia sunt praeter intellectum essentialem nominis simplices et absolute sumpti.*



appropriati. Thomas makes the very revealing remark that these are special modes with respect to the *modus generalissimus* but general modes with respect to the other modes; if we look at this through Siger's system, we find that all fits into place, i.e. the special modes describe features of the essence of a *pars* which serve to individualise it and differentiate it from all other *partes*, while the general modes must refer to its essence even if it transcends the one *pars*, e.g. we find that the *modus per se stantis* and the *modus adiacentis*, which belong to the *modus communis*, can also be found among the *modi subalterni* of the *pronomen*.

The *modus communis* is derived from that property of the thing which is the property of being divisible into or of being shared by several subordinates (1); (the logician derives from the same property the '*intentio universalis*'). This *modus* constitutes the *nomen commune* or *appellativum* (2), what Donatus had called the *qualitas appellativa* (3). The *modus appropriati* is derived from the property of not being

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶28*: *modus significandi per modum communis sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est proprietas divisibilis in plura supposita, vel communicabilis pluribus suppositis.*
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶28*: *nomen commune vel appellativum significat per modum communicabilis pluribus suppositis, ut urbs, flumen.*
- (3) Donatus: *qualitas ... Biperta est: aut enim unius nomen est et proprium dicitur, aut multorum et appellativum.*



divisible by several subordinates, (from which the logician derives the 'intentio individuationis'), and this mode constitutes the nomen proprium <sup>(1)</sup>, what Donatus had called 'propria qualitas' <sup>(2)</sup>.

From these modes which Thomas names modi significandi subalterni generales, we come to the modi significandi subalterni minus generales, which consist of refinements of the modus communis and modus appropriati or we might say of the nomen appellativum and the nomen proprium. The modus communis is divided into two sub-modes, i.e. the modus per se stantis and the modus adjacentis; the modus per se stantis derives from the property of finite essence <sup>(3)</sup>, and just as the modus generalissimus is derived from the property of absolute essence, so the modus per se stantis is derived from the property of definite essence and this constitutes the nomen substantivum. The modus adjacentis derives from the

- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #29: modus significandi per modum appropriati sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est proprietas indivisibilis per plura supposita, a quo sumitur apud Logicum intentio individuationis; et hic modus facit nomen proprium.
- (2) Donatus: qualitas nominum in quo est? Biperta est: aut enim unius nomen est et proprium dicitur, aut multorum et appellativum.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #31: modus significandi per modum per se stantis sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est proprietas essentiae determinatae.



property of adhering to something according to its being <sup>(1)</sup> and constitutes the *nomen adiectivum*. Thomas then proceeds to describe the *modus per se stantis* in detail which he does in the form of 5 *modi specialissimi* which he enumerates, and then repeats the procedure for the *modus adiacentis* which he breaks down into 24 *modi specialissimi*. These merely describe the inventory of the *nomen substantivum* and *adiectivum* of the Latin language, and add nothing to the theory of Modistic descriptive technique; therefore, rather than render this exposition of the Modistic method very top-heavy with needless detail, the diagram <sup>(2)</sup> can be used to explain and illustrate in more detail the scheme of description from the *modus essentialis generalissimus* down to the various *modi specialissimi*; this applies too to the *modi specialissimi* of the *modus appropriati*, which is divided into four *modi specialissimi* which merely serve to describe in more detail the various types of the *nomen proprium* which Latin possesses, e.g. Marcus, etc. We see, then, that the development from *modus essentialis generalissimus* to *modus essentialis specialissimus* is exactly the same as for the *nomen* which goes, via the *nomen appellativum* and *proprium*, to the *nomen substantivum* and *adiectivum* which are sub-divisions of the

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #52: *modus significandi per modum adiacentis sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est proprietas alteri adhaerentis secundum esse.*

(2) cf. Appendix C, p. 626-7.



nomen appellativum, and these are in turn divided into the various types of noun and adjective of the Latin language.

As was said earlier, the *modus subalternus* is peculiar to Thomas, and we have to look to Siger's accidental mode of 'qualitas' before we can find any similar descriptive material of the nomen. Before considering Siger's *qualitas* which describes in a similar manner though perhaps in less detail the various forms of the nomen, it would be perhaps worthwhile to consider a possible explanation of this difference in descriptive method. Siger uses the terminology of Donatus, i.e. *propria qualitas* and *qualitas appellativa*; both, he tells us, are *principia constructionis* and must therefore be respective modes <sup>(1)</sup>. The specific or special mode (in which *qualitas* would have to be placed if it were to be considered under the rubric of *essentialis*) is for Siger an absolute mode, and Thomas's *modus subalternus*, which contains so much of this material, is, as he himself says <sup>(2)</sup>, a *modus specialis* with respect to the *modus*

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(1) Siger's use of '*principium constructionis*' is discussed in 3.13 and 5.211; *principium constructionis* as used by Siger (and Michel de Marbais) seems to have been a device to add to the definition of an accidental mode by stating whether or not the particular *pars orationis* to which this mode belonged was or was not potentially a member of a syntagma by reason of this mode; by definition (cf. 4.243) a respective mode only can be used in a construction along with other accidental modes.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶* 27: (*modi subalterni*) sunt modi speciales respectu generalissimi, et sunt generales respectu aliorum modorum.



generalissimus; in Siger's system such a modus specialis could not possibly be a respective mode, and for this reason (if for no other), qualitas would have to be placed among the accidental modes. At the risk of anticipating things a little, it has to be pointed out that Thomas does discuss the nature of the accidental mode in contrast to the essential mode; Donatus had described qualitas and gradus in terms which in the Modistic system might well have become accidental modes - as indeed they do in Siger's system, though they are included in Thomas's system in the modi subalterni and specialissimi. Qualitas and gradus were considered accidents of the nomen by Donatus (1) according to Thomas, because they belong outside the understanding of the nomen considered absolutely (2), but then any modus significandi of the pars, it if is not the modus essentialis generalissimus of the pars, could be called an accident of the pars (in this case the nomen). Although this modus significandi under discussion may in such terms be an accidental mode, ~~but~~ if it constitutes a species, i.e. a particular type or sub-class of the pars in question, it will not be an accidental mode and will therefore be an essential mode, since by definition (3) an accidental mode may not constitute a different type of

- (1) Donatus: nomini accidunt sex, qualitas, comparatio, genus, numerus, figura, casus.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #66: dicitur comparationem accidere nomini, quia hi tres modi sunt extra intellectum nominis absolute sumpti.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #20: modus significandi accidentalis est, qui advenit parti post eius esse completum, non dans esse simpliciter parti, nec secundum genus, ~~sed~~ secundum speciem.

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the pars in question; therefore 'qualitas appellativa', for instance, constitutes a particular type of nomen and becomes a subaltern essential mode even though it does not state the essence purely and simply of the nomen, whereas 'casus', which expresses a variation of the ~~ess~~ essence of the nomen, remains an accidental mode since it does not create any particular type of essence.

Siger divides his modus accidentalis of qualitas into propria and appellativa, which Thomas called modus communis and modus appropriati. The propria qualitas is the mode which designates the modus essendi of the thing which is not to be found in several subordinate forms (1). Siger refers to Priscian that propria qualitas signifies the private substance or quality of something (2) and just as Thomas divides up his modus appropriati into the four modi specialissimi of praenomen, nomen, cognomen and agnomen, so does Siger divide up his propria qualitas. Similarly, Siger's qualitas appellativa designated the modus essendi of the thing which can be found in several subordinate forms (3); this too he sub-divides into many different types

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: qualitas propria est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi vel quod ei repugnat reperiri in pluribus.
  - (2) Priscian, II, 25: proprium naturaliter uniuscuiusque privatam et qualitatem significat et in rebus est individuus.
  - (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.97: qualitas appellativa est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi prout rei non repugnat reperiri in pluribus.



which he enumerates without the repetitive detail of Thomas. Both propria and appellativa qualitas are principia constructionis, the former with a vocative verb, the latter with signs expressive universality, e.g. omnis, nullus, and which cannot be properly constructed with propria nomina, and therefore it is incorrect to say, 'omnis Socrates'.

The adiectivum is an accidental mode of the nomen representing the property of "adjacency" (1); again Siger refers to Priscian (2) that adiectiva are so called because they are usually added to other nomina appellativa which signify substance or even nomina propria for the exhibition of praise or blame, etc. Siger reinforces his statement with a further reference to Peter Helias which considerably extends the province of the adiectivum (3), i.e. to describe the accidental properties of the nomen. The substantivum is the accidental mode of the nomen which expresses the modus per se entis and the modus abstracti and will refer to 'entia' which are strictly speaking self-evident as in the case of substances, and 'entia' which are quite separate as in the

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.97: adiectivum est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circumferentiam modum essendi adiacentis.
  - (2) Priscian, II, 25: adiectiva autem ideo vocantur, quod aliis appellativis, quae substantiam significant, vel etiam propriis adici solent ad manifestandum eorum qualitatem vel quantitatem.
  - (3) Siger de Courtrai, pp.97-8: cognitio substantialibus vel accidentalibus essentialibus, adinventum fuerunt adiectiva ut proprietates accidentales circa ea demonstrant. \*



case of abstract occurrences (1). Both the *modus per se entis* and *modus abstracti* can be the principal constructible categories of sentence structure, i.e. *principium constructionis*; the *substantivum* will be the constructible member in the construction of the *suppositum* and *appositum*, i.e. subject and predicate, though the *adiectivum* cannot, because the *verbum*, which is the principal element of the *appositum*, signifies, as we shall see, by means of the *modus dependentis* and will, therefore, be proportionate to the *modus significandi per se* and not to the *modus significandi adiacentis*.

In Thomas's scheme the *modus significandi essentialis generalissimus nominis*, which contains the *modus entis*, is divided into *modi subalterni* (which are *modi speciales* in relation to the *modus generalissimus*) and these *modi speciales* become *modi specialissimi*. Similarly the *nomen* is divided into the *nomen commune* or *appellativum* and the *nomen proprium*; the *nomen commune* is further divided into the *substantivum* and *adiectivum*, the former, i.e. the *nomen substantivum* becoming the *nomen substantivum generale* and the *nomen speciale*, which are the *nomen patronymicum*, *collectivum* and *diminutivum*. The *adiectivum* similarly is divided into *denominativum*, *generale*, *speciale*, *collectivum*, *possessivum*,

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.98: *substantivum est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, designans circa rem modum per se entis et abstracti sive sit proprie ens per se, sicut substantiae, sive sint entia per se distincta ab illo in quo sunt, et ut sic significata, ut in accidentibus abstractis.*



diminutivum, divisum, gentile, patrium, interrogativum, responsivum, infinitum, negativum, demonstrativum, relativum, positivum, comparativum, superlativum, ad aliquid, temporale, verbale, locale, numerale and ordinale, which might be very briefly described as a partly formal and partly semantic classification of morphological distinctions of the nomen in Latin. The nomen proprium is divided into proprie proprium, praenomen, cognomen and agnomen (1).

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- (1) Thomas concludes his examination of the various types of nomina by including more for the sake of exhaustiveness rather than for any new feature of the nomen; these are certain nomina which do not differ so much in their meaning but do so in the expression (vox): cf. Thomas of Erfurt # 65: *plura nomina usitata, quae differentiam specialem non habent secundum modos significandi, discrepantes magis secundum diversitatem vocis, quam significati*. This means in effect that separate modes of signifying are not required, because if their root meanings do not differ, they can presumably be included among the *modi specialissimi* already described and will not require special modes of signifying to express them; their voces may be different, but this fact does not lead to the creation of special modes of signifying, since vox is merely the matter (cf. 311) which is 'informed' into a *pars orationis* by means of the ratio significandi (4.1), and vox is therefore never realised as vox but as a *pars orationis*, which is expressed by means of modes of signifying; but in the case of these particular nomina, the modes of signifying have already been listed and described. These nomina, to which Thomas is referring, are nomina such as "univocum, analogum, aequivocum, synonymum, absolutum, fictum", will be included either among the *nomina substantiva* or the *nomina adiectiva* which have already been described as *modi specialissimi* by the virtue of the essential modes of signifying they possess.



The exposition of Thomas and Siger of the substantivum and the adiectivum suggest an interesting contrast in styles and also of attitude; Thomas presents us with a detailed description whereas Siger glosses over the inventorial analysis and attempts a discussion of the nature of the adiectivum and substantivum, which seems to be much closer to the Modistic, and indeed mediaeval ideal of a descriptive grammar.

5.1112 Modus significandi accidentalis nominis.

We have seen in the previous section that Thomas and Siger defined the essential mode of the nomen as the 'modus entis' which possesses a specific feature, that of designating with precision, i.e. by means of determinata apprehensio. Their presentation of this essential mode, though stating the same grammatical doctrine, had differed in that Siger had created the sub-modes of general and specific, the general mode being used to state the 'pure' essence of the pars, i.e. the nomen, which it shared with the pronomen, and the specific mode being the means of stating and defining the distinction between the partes orationis which happen to share the same essence, i.e. the nomen designates with precision, the pronoun does not. This definition of the essence of the nomen does not differ from Thomas's, but he states both parts as one mode, i.e. the modus generalissimus; he then describes the sub-modes of the essential mode, i.e.



the modus subalternus and the modus specialissimus which he uses to list in greater detail those words which possess the same essence as the essence described in the modus generalissimus: possessing this same 'basic' essence, they differ merely in that they represent some more individual property of this general essence, and as a result constitute a particular type of the pars, e.g. the substantivum and adiectivum possess the same general essence of 'modus entis' but are differentiated in that the substantivum expresses the property of finite essence which is expressed by the modus per se stantis, whereas the adiectivum expresses the property of adhering to something which is expressed by means of the modus adiacentis.

Different modi specialissimi are then used to specify in detail the types of words which express this general essence and its property by means of a more individualising feature, e.g. the interrogative adjective (1).

Once their definition of the essential modes has been completed, Siger and Thomas discuss the accidental modes which represent variations of the general essence and its properties: Siger uses, for the nomen, nine accidental modes, while Thomas uses only six. These accidental modes are

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, # 44: modus adiacentis est modus significandi per modum dominantis alterum sub ratione interrogationis de ipso: et hic modus constituit nomen adiectivum interrogativum, ut quis, qualis.



species, figura, genus, numerus, casus, gradus, qualitas, substantivum, adiectivum and persona; of these Siger does not include persona as an accidental mode of the nomen, while Thomas included qualitas, substantivum and adiectivum, as we have seen already, as his subaltern modes or in the case of 'gradus' as modi specialissimi derived from the subaltern mode, i.e. the nomen adiectivum.

Thomas's description of qualitas as a subaltern essential mode of the nomen in contrast to Siger's classification of it as an accidental mode merits comment in detail at this stage, since it reveals a great deal about their conception, use and organisation of the essential and accidental modes. In his introductory remarks to the accidental modes of the nomen, Thomas discusses Donatus's classification of qualitas and gradus as 'accidents' of the nomen (which Siger follows). Thomas states that this has been done since they described something more than the pure and absolute essence of the nomen (1). This is very important since it provides the key to Thomas's analysis in terms of the modus subalternus and modus specialissimus, and also to Siger's use of the general and specific essential modes. It will be seen throughout that Siger uses his essential mode merely to state

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #66: dicuntur accidere nomini, quia sunt praeter intellectum essentialem nominis simpliciter et absolute sumpti.



the absolute essence of the pars in question and that qualification of the essence by means of which the pars is distinguished from all the other <sup>tes</sup> ~~par~~ orationis; for this reason, he includes qualitas etc. as accidental modes since they say nothing about the essence itself of the nomen, and this will be the procedure (in theory) in all the other partes orationis. Thomas describes the features that Donatus classified as accidents, i.e. qualitas and gradus, along with his essential modes since any feature which does not belong to the pars by virtue of the modus generalissimus, i.e. its purest essence, can in fact be an accident (1). Although the feature may be an accident, if we can restrict the essential mode to the expression of the essence in the narrowest sense and therefore exclude the feature from the modus generalissimus, it may still, however, be able to create a species of the pars and by definition this cannot be an accidental mode; it will thus become an essential sub-mode, i.e. subaltern, since it expresses a property of the essence and also constitutes a species of the pars. This is echoed by Siger in his Sophisma "O Magister", when he argues that 'whiteness' may be an accident of 'homo', but it is

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #6: omnis modus significandi partis, qui non est modus essentialis generalissimus, potest dici accidens nominis absolute.



essential to 'homo albus', (1). This is a characteristic of Thomas's analyses of the essential modes of the partes, and we shall find that any feature which expresses a property of the essence and also creates a species of the pars in question will be classed as a subaltern mode (2). This is certainly so in the indeclinable partes, and any of Donatus's 'accidents' which yield a different species of the pars in question will, in Thomas's scheme become a *modus subalternus*; conversely, however, *qualitas* in the verb, which Donatus classified as an accident, remains an accidental mode since it is not the expression of a property of the essence of the verb, nor does it create any species of verb (3). There are, of course, problems in such an analysis; Donatus was criticised for including *qualitas*, which he divided into *demonstratio* and *relatio* as a feature of the pronoun. Thomas is compelled to include *demonstratio* and *relatio* as subaltern modes of the pronoun; although they do not constitute different species of the pronoun, they represent mutually exclusive properties, i.e. presence and absence, of substance in the pronoun (4) and become merely two complementary aspects of the *pronomen substantivum*.

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.147: *albedo sit accidens hominis et tamen est de essentia hominis albi.*

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶128*: *non est modus essentialis generalissimus, cum verbo non det esse simpliciter, sed sit praeter eius intellectum essentialem. Nec etiam est essentialis specialis (i.e. subaltern) cum non constituat aliquam speciem verbi.*

(3) cf. 5.1122, p.372.

(4) cf. 5.1141, p.424.



Of the accidental modes, species and figura are absolute modes and the remainder are respective (1); species and figura represent derivational features of the nomen and are absolute modes since they themselves possess no syntactic function, though of course they have no influence whatsoever on the syntactic behaviour of the pars by virtue of the respective accidental modes. Most of these respective modes are categories well known to most grammarians and require no further comment at this stage, genus being 'gender', numerus 'number', and casus 'case'. Qualitas, which Siger included as an accidental mode but which Thomas made into a subaltern mode, represents those features known traditionally as 'common' and 'proper' nouns; of these accidental modes, persona is the only one which requires any preliminary explanation. This mode was included by Thomas, <sup>and</sup> by Martin, but no mention is made of it by Siger; this use of persona as an accidental mode represents a very definite departure from tradition by Thomas and Martin, and this becomes especially worthy of mention, when it is realised that Thomas did not consider persona to be a genuine accidental mode of the verb (traditionally person is always ascribed to the verb) but admits it as an accidental mode of the verb only by virtue of its association with the suppositum (2); person in the nomen is the mode of signifying

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(1) cf. 4.243.

(2) cf. 3.13 where this term is discussed.



by means of which it connotates the property of speaking (1) and this property is acquired by the verb by virtue of its association (by means of compositio) with its subject (suppositum) (2).

Donatus attributed six accidents to the nomen, viz. qualitas, comparatio, genus, numerus, figura, casus; Priscian attributed only five, i.e. species, genus, figura, numerus, casus.

In the 12th century, Abelard, for instance, had been content to follow his Latin predecessors, distinguishing the accidents of the nomen by means of their properties, or by means of their constructible potentialities, or by means of the nature of their expression, i.e. vox (3). Peter Helias did not use this classification, but preferred to relate many of the accidental modes to their function in a construction (4). He admitted in the nomen only those accidents which had been enumerated by Priscian and he criticised Donatus in particular for having included qualitas and comparatio among the accidents of the nomen.

- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶*94: est persona modus significandi nominis, mediante quo nomen proprietatem loquendi consignificat.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶*145: numerus et persona insunt verbo, non ex proprietate suae rei per se loquendo, sed ex proprietate rei suppositi. cf. also 5.1122.
- (3) Abelard: sunt quedam nominum proprietates iuxta significationem pensande, quedam vero secundum positionem constructionis atendende, quedam etiam secundum vocis compositionem accipiende.
- (4) Peter Helias: accidentia nomini dicuntur convenientia ipsi, secundum que nomina inter se vel cum aliis dictionibus competenter habent construi. (Quoted by Thurot, p.165).



The Modistae are not alike in their classification and use of the accidental modes; Martin of Dacia and Thomas make use of only six accidental modes, i.e. those of Priscian and in addition 'persona', - these are what Thomas calls "de modis pure accidentalibus". Michel de Marbais however lists the six accidental modes which are those of Donatus. Siger is much more liberal and uses actually nine accidental modes, i.e. those of Donatus and also species, substantivum and adiectivum. Thurot states that by the 13th century there was a tendency to introduce accidents of the nomen which were not known to Donatus and Priscian; this is confirmed by Siger a) by precept, and b) by implication in his statement about the accidental modes (1). Siger's modes of qualitas, substantivum and adiectivum have already been described along with Thomas's modus subalternus; this was done, as already stated, in order to maintain a statement of a more or less common doctrine among the Modistae, since such disagreement as does exist is not one of doctrine but organisation.

The following table shows the various accidental modes of the nomen described by the grammarians of antiquity and the Middle Ages:

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: modorum significandi accidentalium nominis quam plurimorum solum maiores et communiores enumerans, Donatus pro accidentibus posuit sex... Priscianus autem quinque..., sed de hoc non est vis. We shall see that this is also true of the verb, since Thomas introduces 'compositio' as an accidental mode of the verb, and by his account this is a category not used by his predecessors.



	Donatus	Priscian	Martin	Siger	Michel	Thomas
qualitas	+			+	+	
species		+	+	+		+
gradus	+			+	+	
genus	+	+	+	+	+	+
numerus	+	+	+	+	+	+
figura	+	+	+	+	+	+
casus	+	+	+	+	+	+
persona			+			+
substantivum				+		
adiectivum				+		

It has already been pointed out that Thomas did not include 'gradus' among his accidental modes, though he does list among the nomina adiectiva, the adiectivum positivum, comparativum and superlativum, but says in effect nothing more about them than to include them in his inventory; his reasons for doing this have just been stated (1). Since Siger, on the other hand, has much more to say about gradus as an accidental mode of the nomen, it has been included in this exposition of the accidental modes and not among the modi subalterni and specialissimi.

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(1) cf. p. 239-41.



(a) Species et Figura.

The Modistae divided the accidental modes of a pars orationis into absolute and respective (1); an absolute mode is a derivational (2) feature and in the Modistic scheme such a mode plays no part in either the inflectional paradigm or in the syntax of the pars in question, nor can it influence the congruence of a construction. A respective mode, on the other hand, in addition to the feature that it describes, represents it as a feature by means of which the pars orationis to which it belongs can fulfil a higher, i.e. syntactic function and therefore the sum total of the respective modes of a pars orationis will represent its potentiality as a member of a construction.

This is a very valuable distinction that the Modistae made, since it enabled them to define the derivational features of the pars without further reference to other accidental modes or to grammatical, i.e. syntactic requirements. By making this division the respective modes can also be defined by means of their own criteria but by definition are related to the higher, i.e. syntactic function of the pars. This meant that the Modistae were able

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- (1) cf. 4.243, where absolute and respective modes and the difference between are discussed at greater length.  
 (2) 'derivational' is used here in the synchronic sense, cf. Bloch & Trager, Outline of Linguistic Analysis, p.55.



to avoid the severe distinction between morphology and syntax which so often occurs in the more normative type of grammar, and it also enabled them to segregate those items, which cannot possess any further functional yield, from those items which show a degree of inter-penetration between the morpho-semantic and syntactic levels, which a great many traditional grammars ignore. Such accidental i.e. respective modes require, as a result, a definition and description which transcend the mere morpho-semantic and thereby produce a definition more in terms of the functional yield of the mode than of its particular morphology or semantics.

The Modistae used two accidental modes, i.e. species and figura, to describe the derivational features of a pars orationis, and these modes are absolute modes since they merely describe the pars in terms of the derivations which it manifests within the area of its meaning, e.g. 'albus' and 'albedo' are adjective and substantive, and are classed therefore as species of the nomen. 'Albedo', however, as a substantive contrasts with the verb 'dealbo' so that the distinction between them has gone beyond the semantic difference between one species of a pars and another species of the same pars. The difference between 'albedo' and 'dealbo' is now a functional i.e. syntactic distinction, and they are at this level distinguished by their different consignifications (1).

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(1) cf. 3.11, where consignification is discussed; also 4.1, where consignification in the sense of functional meaning and connotation is discussed.



The two absolute modes in question are 'species' which can be described as 'type' and 'figura' which can best be interpreted by Thrax's term "skhema" (1); these two absolute modes are considered together because of the fundamental difference between them and the other accidental modes. The Modistae used species and figura in every instance when derivation affected the intrinsic nature of the pars and these modes can therefore be applied to both declinable and indeclinable partes. In contrast to the absolute modes, all the other accidental modes must be considered, not only in terms of themselves, but in terms of their syntactic behaviour; this applies equally well to any accidental mode of an indeclinable pars which is not an absolute mode, and we shall see that, for instance, 'ordo' in the conjunction (2) is used entirely with reference to its consignification, i.e. its syntactic meaning. The absolute modes represent, as we have said, the derivational features of the pars; derivation is here used in a wider and different sense than the modern linguist would probably use it; derivation as conceived by the Modistae was not a formal, i.e. syntactic or morphological feature, but merely a meaning derived from

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(1) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.99.

(2) cf. 5.1222.



another meaning. Species <sup>(1)</sup>, divided into primary and secondary, represents a root meaning, i.e. a species primitiva from which <sup>a</sup>secondary meaning, i.e. species derivativa (or determinativa - to use Siger's term) can be derived, e.g. mons montanus, but these meanings must in the first place be semantically linked by means of a common essence. Figura <sup>(2)</sup> represents a simple primary form which can be modified by means of a morphological change but it is nonetheless a change demanded in order to express a semantic change, e.g. 'dives' from which the compound form 'praedives' is derived; figura can be simple (simplex), compound (composita) and according to Thomas complex (decomposita), though Siger will not admit this as a discrete member of the accidental mode of figura <sup>(3)</sup>.

Species is not, however, described in formal terms, and thus 'mons' represents the primary species and 'montanus' the species derived from 'mons'. Such a derivation, however,

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: species est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans proprietatem determinandi ab aliquo vel a nullo.

Thomas of Erfurt, #68: species est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, mediante quo modum significandi primum vel secundarium significat. Et dēviditur in speciem primitivam et derivativam.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.102: figura est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi indivisionis vel compositionis.

Thomas of Erfurt, #82: figura est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, mediante quo nomen proprietatem simplicis, compositi, vel decompositi significat.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: figura decomposita non designat circa rem aliquem modum essendi distinctum a praedictis (i.e. simplex and composita).



is not defined by means of any morphological criteria, but by the semantic relationship of the two forms, i.e. 'montanus' must be derived from 'mons', since 'montanus' cannot signify 'mons' absolutely but only in relation to the inhabitant of the mountain. Such an explanation seems perfectly reasonable and could perhaps lend itself to a more formal statement, if similar derivations could be established systematically; but the Modistae, particularly Thomas, by insisting that the relation between the primary and derived species was entirely one of meaning and by excluding the different expression form, i.e. vox - (this applies to Thomas only since Siger is prepared to admit <sup>(1)</sup> that vox along with the property of the thing or meaning can be a factor in producing a change of species ), produced statements which, although they appear semantically logical, are in fact grammatically naïve. Thomas argues that vox must be excluded entirely from any consideration of species, since to include vox as a criterion would mean that the mode of signifying would be derived from the vox and not from the property of the thing and would produce what Thomas would

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: species determinativa est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans modum essendi ut secundarium, seu rivulus, et ab alio descendens sive sit descensus a parte vocis solum, sive ex parte proprietatis et passivae significationis.



undoubtedly consider an aberration, such as 'albedo' being derived from 'albus' (1). Thomas, of course, argues the contrary, i.e. that whiteness must exist before white or white things can exist and bases his grammatical statement on such philosophical grounds.

Species is divided into primary (primitiva) and derived (derivativa - Siger uses the term determinativa rather than derivativa (2) ) and refers to the 'shape' of word (3), ~~is~~ *with this particular instance the nomen; species is therefore* the accidental mode which designates the property of being determined from something or nothing. The Modistae argued that species primitiva, as an accidental mode of signifying, must refer to the modus essendi of the thing in its primary form - what might be called the root primary or root word - and species primitiva thus expresses the primary or absolute essence as it is in its root form and incapable of any further sub-division (4). (This statement

- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #67: species...non attenditur ex parte vocis...ita quod illud nomen sit primitivae speciei, cuius vox est primo ad significandum imposita: et illud derivativae speciei, cuius vox est secundario imposita, a voce primitiva descendens, ut albus descendit ab albedine; quia iam modus significandi activus a voce traheretur, et non a proprietate rei; quod est contra posita...species sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est modus existendi primarie, vel secundarie.
- (2) Clearly, 'determinata' has the meaning of 'derivativa' for Siger, if his use elsewhere of 'determinare' is any guide, e.g. "magnanimitas" a "magnanimo" determinatur.
- (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: species est positio vocabuli primaria aut secundaria.
- (4) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: species primitiva est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans modum essendi ut est primus et formalis et non ab alio descendens.



is made to stress that the primary form cannot be reduced to any lesser meaning - the criteria all along will be primarily semantic). Derived species (*species derivativa*) refers to the creation of a new form by means of an internal change in the meaning of the pars and which must as a result find its formulation in a variation of the root meaning of the pars; the derived species is a free form but in contrast to the primary species, it is also a complex form. The term complex is used specifically in this instance to avoid confusion with composite since this term composite represents a sub-class of figura; it may well happen, and indeed it does happen, that in Siger's description the figura decomposita partakes of both a figura composita and a species derivativa - this does not however occur in Thomas's scheme.

Species thus represents the root meaning of a word, i.e. the primary form of the *modus essendi* or property of the thing to be signified, which is in fact its absolute essence since it cannot be derived from a lower, i.e. morphemic structure; such a primary form is capable of becoming a derived form by means of a change in meaning but which must, however, be derived from the primary meaning (1). Species, and more particularly species primitiva, becomes the

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, 468: *mons primitivae speciei est, quia significat rem sub essentia primaria, quae est essentia absoluta...montanus derivativae speciei est, quia significat rem sub esse secundario, quae est essentia comparata.*



foundation of the structure of the whole pars since it represents that form of the pars which cannot be analysed into smaller segments, i.e. into lesser meaningful components. An additional factor is that any change of meaning between the primary and derived species cannot influence the syntactic function of the pars; once, however, as a result of a change in meaning, a different pars orationis is created, we are then no longer dealing with the accidental mode of signifying but with the consignifications of two different partes orationis (1).

As a preamble to his analysis of species, Thomas had stated that species must not be considered in reference to the expression, i.e. the vox of the nomen; the vox merely gives expression to the derivation from the primary form which the mind has perceived and which it must express by means of another mode of signifying (2). If vox were to play a vital part in the sequence, it would mean that the species derivativa would be structured on the vox of the species primitiva, so that 'albedo' would come from 'albus'; this would mean that the active mode of signifying is derived from the vox and not from the property of

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(1) cf. 3.11 and 4.1 for the use of consignification.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~46~~: intellectus vocem ad significandum sub aliquo modo significandi activo imponit.



the thing - which is not the case (1). Such a statement, i.e. that 'albedo' is derived from 'albus' as the result of a morphonemic change, would be quite acceptable to the modern linguist, but clearly the Modistae, as a result of the fundamental tenets of their theory, could never have accepted such a description. Arguing as they do, that the modes of signifying function in order to give meaning to the various properties of the thing under consideration, it is the root meaning that will be built upon and not the converse, and the very nature of their grammatical theory and descriptive technique must of necessity preclude any morphological criteria which would contradict the priority of their semantic criteria. As was pointed out in the chapter on the metalanguage of the Modistae (2), Thomas stated at a very early stage that the active mode of signifying must derive from some property of the thing (3). Therefore species must be derived from the property of the thing which is either the mode of existing primarily in the case of the species *primitiva* or the mode of existing secondarily, i.e. derivatively in the case of the species *derivativa*, the former being the absolute mode of existing and the latter the comparative mode (4).

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #6: *cuilibet modo significandi activo correspondet aliqua proprietas rei, seu modus essendi rei.*

(2) cf. 4.24.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #6: *omnem modum significandi activum ab aliqua rei proprietate radicaliter oriri.*

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #7: *voco modum significandi primarie, modum existendi absolute; et modum significandi secundarie, modum existendi comparate.*



If species is a means of creating a sub-class or a new form of the pars by means of a change of meaning which must be derived from the root meaning, figura is the means of creating a new form within the pars by means of a change in the shape of the word. Species can therefore be called semantic derivation within the word-class and figura the morpho-semantic change within the pars. Species and figura are complementary, in that species refers to the root meaning and forms which are created or derived as a result of meanings derived from the root meaning, while figura refers to the root or simple form and to the compound forms of the pars but is, however, attested by more formal criteria than in the case of species; with regard to figura, it is nevertheless, change of meaning which produces a concomitant change in form, and it must not be imagined that it was a change of grammatical form which occasioned the change of meaning. Figura is, therefore, a derivational item, the method of indicating the difference in meaning between the different figurae of a pars being realised by means of the compounding of different forms with the root form to produce a compound word, 'composition' leading to two sub-classes of the compound form, i.e. compound (composita) and double compound or complex (decomposita).

Donatus divided figura into two sub-categories which he called simple (simplex) e.g. decens, and composite (composita) e.g. indecens, and according to Donatus, these



can be combined in four ways to create new words (1).

Priscian added a third sub-category, i.e. complex (decomposita) which can be derived from a compound word only.

Figura in the nomen can therefore be defined as an accidental mode by means of which the nomen can signify the properties of indivisibility, composition and complexity (2).

Of the Modistae, Michel and Siger preserved the dichotomy of Donatus, i.e. Michel describes figura as the mode of signifying used by the nomen to express the thing in the form of its simple or compound being (esse) (3), and Siger defines figura as the accidental mode which designates the modus essendi in its undivided or compound form:

Siger, it is true, talks about 'decompositio', but this is for him a variant (though not a free variant) of the composite form. Thomas of Erfurt follows Priscian and introduces the third element of 'decompositio', as a result of which figura becomes the mode of signifying by means of which the nomen signifies the property of simple, compound and double compound or complex form, and by virtue of this

(1) Donatus: Figurae nominum quot sunt? Duae. Quae? Simplex, ut decens, potens, composita, ut indecens...Quibus modis nomina componuntur? Quattuor: ex duobus integris, ut suburbanus; ex duobus corruptis, ut efficax..; ex corrupto et integro, ut nugigerulus; aliquando ex conpluribus, ut inexpugnabilis.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #62: figura est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, mediante quo nomen proprietatem simplicis, compositi, vel decompositi significat.

(3) Michel de Marbais: figura est quidam modus significandi datus nomini ad designandum rem sub esse simplici vel compositi. (Quoted by Thurot, p.168).



triple property of the mode of signifying, the figura of the nomen varies in a three-fold manner, i.e. simple (simplex), compound (composita) and double compound or complex (decomposita). This triple division, Thomas tells us, results from the fact that these three properties of uncompounded, compounded and double compounded can be commonly found in the world of things, the third type representing a combination which derives from more than two components. It is as a result of this similarity between the structure of words and the structure of things that Thomas insists that figura, like species, does not refer to the expression, i.e. vox, since, as was pointed out in the section on species, the modes of signifying are derived from the property of the thing (1). We can have thus, in Thomas's scheme of things, a nomen of simple figura (form), e.g. doctus, a nomen of a compound figura, e.g. indoctus, and a nomen of a double compound figura, e.g. inexpugnabilis.

Figura simplex is defined as the mode of signifying the thing by means of the property of simple form, or as Siger would say, the property of indivisibility, e.g. dives (2).

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #19: figura, prout est modus significandi nominis, non accipitur vocis...figura sumitur a proprietate rei.  
 (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.102: figura simplex est figura designans circa rem modum essendi indivisionis intelligendo indivisionem non solum quantum ad rem sed quantum ad intellectum ut apparet in "u" et "x" et huius modi, cuius partes separate nihil significant nec valent significare.  
 Thomas of Erfurt, #83: figura simplex est modus significandi rem sub proprietate simplicis, ut dives pauper.



Siger explains that indivisibility does not refer so much to the thing as to the understanding and therefore to the meaning of the thing, since it is possible to break off the /-x/ in 'senex', etc., but to do so would be to destroy the meaning of the word since the separate parts mean nothing nor are they capable of having meaning.

Figura composita is defined as the mode of signifying the thing by means of the property of compound form, e.g. praedives (1); Siger described this feature as composition made up from the thing itself, the understanding and the expression (vox) (2); he continues that the parts of a nomen of compound figura, by the very fact that they are parts of such a nomen, do not always retain their own entirely separate ~~parts~~ <sup>meanings</sup> (3). However, these parts, when separated, have the ability to be considered separate meaningful parts in and of themselves although this meaning may not necessarily be entirely the same nor will the parts, of

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #83: figura composita est modus significandi sub proprietate compositi, ut praedives, praeclarus.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.102-3: figura composita est figura designans circa rem modum essendi compositionis, compositionis inquam rei, intellectus et vocis.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: licet partes nominis compositae figurae, ut partes, propinque, sunt et in actu talis nominis nihil significant separatae, quia sunt partes incompositae...tamen partes nominis compositione figurae, remote, in potentia, partes secundum se consideratae, bene aliquid significant separatae et idem quod in composito vel non penitus idem.



necessity, take the same shape as the whole; this must not be interpreted that the individual parts have no meaning but that as parts of a combination they have no separate meaning, i.e. separate from the composite form to which they now belong. Priscian <sup>(1)</sup> tells us, says Siger, that compound figura is made up from separate words with separately understood meaning, i.e. it is made up of free forms but not necessarily in their original shape, and which signify one thing when uttered with an accent which belongs to the whole form and not to either of the parts <sup>(2)</sup>; these parts are revealed in their entirety when considered separately and are seen to possess an independent meaning. We can compare, to illustrate this particular feature, the well-known examples of 'green house' and 'green-house'.

Figura decomposita is defined as the mode of signifying the thing by means of the property of double composition and is made up from a composition of free forms and bound forms, e.g. *inexpugnabilis* <sup>(3)</sup>. Siger denies that the

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- (1) Priscian (V.56): ipsa per se ex diversis componatur dictionibus separatim intelligendis sub uno accentu et unam rem suppositam (id est significandum) accipiat, ut est 'respublica'.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: figura composita per se componitur ex divisim dictionibus separatim intelligendis, sub uno accentu unam rem significantibus ut est: "respublica", quae per se prolata integra sunt et intellectum habent plenum.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #83: decomposita est modus significandi sub proprietate decompositi, id est, sub proprietate collectionis.



figura decomposita designates any modus essendi distinct from either the simple or the compound figura, and for this reason Donatus used only the two categories, i.e. simplex and composita. Siger does however distinguish between the compound (composita) and the decomposite (decomposita), in that the decomposite must contain a bound form (1). Siger explains that the Greeks used 'parasynteton', i.e. derived from the compound as a device to distinguish it from either the simple or compound - in this Priscian followed the Greeks and separated the simple from the decomposita, arguing that the latter cannot be a figura simplex because it is derived from a figura composita in the way that 'magnanimitas' is derived from 'magnanim<sup>us</sup>'; it cannot be a figura simplex, nor can it be a compound figura because it cannot be divided into intelligible parts (2). Such then is 'magnanimitas' since 'animitas' cannot occur by itself, which means that it cannot be a figura composita.

There is, in Siger's scheme, a very close link between the figura composita and the species determinativa in that a figura decomposita partakes of both of these (3); there

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(1) The ending /-bilis/ can never occur independently and with an independent meaning.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: non potest esse simplicis figurae et a composita, quia id non potest esse compositum quod non potest dividi in partes intelligibiles.

(3) Magnus can be considered the primary species which can become the derived species of 'magnanimus' which as well as being a species derivativa will also be a figura composita made up of 'magnus' and 'animus'.



is, however, no such relationship in Thomas's scheme between species and figura - for him a figura simplex is a form which cannot be split into further component parts, while a figura composita consists of two members and a figura decomposita of more than two members. Siger considered figura simplex as a form incapable of further division and the figura composita as made up of two meaningful parts, though they may not have any further direct association with the meaning of the compound form. The great difference between Siger and Thomas in their consideration of figura lies in their different conceptions of the figura decomposita. As we have just seen, for Thomas the decomposita is merely made of more than two members <sup>(1)</sup>; Siger however argues that the decomposita does not designate any modus essendi distinct from either the simplex or composita <sup>(2)</sup>; following Priscian, who in turn had followed the Greeks, the figura decomposita is a derivation from a compound figura but is not a combination of free forms, i.e. of a simplex and compound and cannot therefore be broken down into its component parts. Siger says that a word such as 'magnanimitas' is a double compound i.e. complex form and as such is derived from 'magnanimus' which is itself a compound figura

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #83: decomposita est modus significandi sub proprietate decompositi, id est, sub proprietate collectionis, ut inexpugnabilis.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: decompositam a simplici separat quia illud non potest esse simplicis figurae quod a composita determinatur, ut "magnanimitas" a "magnanimo" determinatur.



made up from 'magnus' and 'animus' (1); 'magnanimitas' itself cannot be broken down into meaningful components. If it were a compound figura it would be possible to break it into 'magn-' and 'animitas', but 'animitas' as such does not exist and it cannot therefore be a compound figura.

Siger excludes figura decomposita as a separate category, his argument being that some decompositae can be analysed into parts in such a way as to become a figura composita; he analyses 'impietas' as a combination of /in-/, the negative formant of adjectives, and /pietas/ to become a figura composita made up from two simple figurae, but it can also be analysed as compounded from 'impius, impii' in which the final /-i/ changes to /-e-/ and with the addition of /-tas/ becomes a figura decomposita. The first type of analysis is not always possible, though the second type can always be made; 'magnanimitas' cannot be described as a figura composita in the way the 'impietas' was shown to be made from the two meaningful segments of 'im-' and 'pietas'.

'Magnanimitas' cannot be analysed in this way, since there is no such segment as 'animitas', but it can be shown to be a derivation from a compound figura with the addition of the

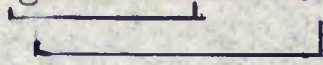
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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: non potest esse simplicis figurae et a composita, quia id non potest esse composite quod non potest dividi in partes intelligibiles; nunc 'magnanimitas' est huiusmodi quia "animitas" per se non dicitur, ideo non potest esse compositae figurae.



suffix /-tas/, i.e.

magn - animi - tas



so that Siger can quote Peter Helias, that the only derived form possible from a composite figura is a figura possessing a figura decomposita (1).

In these analyses of the figurae of the nomen we see the beginnings of a rudimentary IC analysis; this is seen quite clearly in Siger's concluding remarks that something can be at one and the same time a figura composita and a figura decomposita, as Siger himself shows by his two different analyses of 'impietas'.

To avoid giving the impression that the Modistae used a purely formal approach to their description of figura, we must consider Thomas's concluding remarks which summarise the features of the figura, but in emphatically semantic terms. A dictio will be of a figura simplex which is imposed from a simple concept; similarly a figura composita will be imposed from a compound concept, and so it will be in the case of a figura decomposita, i.e. it will be established

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.103: est ergo decompositae pro tanto quia a composito determinatur, ideo dicit Commentator quod sola determinatio ex composito est figura decompositae figurae.



from more than two concepts. Such concepts are not imaginary, and therefore they must correspond to the same properties in the thing, and those properties are the same as those which the nomen signifies by means of those concepts which have just been enumerated.

(b) Gradus

We have already seen <sup>(1)</sup> that Thomas included 'gradus' among the modi specialissimi of the nomen, since the three grades of positive, comparative and superlative represent three types of nomen adiectivum <sup>(2)</sup>; but he has nothing more to say about them and is content merely to include them in his inventory of the modi specialissimi which represent the different types of nomina adiectiva derived from the subaltern mode, i.e. modus adiacentis. Siger, on the other hand, includes gradus among the accidental modes of the nomen and discusses this feature in much greater detail.

(1) cf. p. 239-41.

(2) Thomas includes comparatio in the adverb as an accidental mode: Thomas clearly saw the three grades of the adjective as three different adjectives, whereas in the adverb the comparison is derived from the accidental modes of species and figura and does not affect the fundamental role of the adverb.



Donatus stated that there were three degrees of comparison, that only nomina signifying qualitas or quantity can be compared, that the comparative degree can be used with the ablative without preposition, e.g. doctior illo, and that the superlative is used only with the genitive plural, e.g. doctissimus poetarum (1).

Michel de Marbais defined gradus as the mode of signifying by means of which the nomen can express the property of intensity or diminishing with regard to the thing either simply as it is or as it represents an extension beyond its limits (2). Siger compared gradus in grammar to a flight of stairs, i.e. in actual life one climbs from the lowest to the top and vice versa by means of such a flight of stairs, and so it is in grammar (3); therefore gradus is the accidental mode of the nomen which designates the modus essendi as it is in excess and is divided into positive, comparative and superlative (4).

- (1) Donatus: conparationis gradus quot sunt? Tres. Qui? Positivus, ut doctus, comparativus, up doctior, superlativus, ut doctissimus. Quae nomina comparantur? Appellativa dumtaxat qualitatem aut quantitatem significantia. Comparativus gradus cui casui servit? Ablativo sine praepositione: dicimus enim 'doctior illo'. Superlativus cui? Genetivo tantum plurali: dicimus enim 'doctissimus poetarum'.
- (2) Michel de Marbais: gradus est quidam modus significandi datus nomini ad designandum rem intensibilem vel remissibilem, ut est in subiecto simpliciter aut cum excessu. (cf. Thurot, p.167).
- (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.98: sicut per gradus proprie dictos fit ascensus de infimo ad summum et e converso descensus, ita in gradibus grammaticae considerationis fit ascensus in forma comparabili de infimo ad summum, et e converso.
- (4) Siger de Courtrai, p.98: gradus est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi prout est in excessu vel cum excessu, et dividitur in positivum, comparativum et superlativum.



The positive is the degree of comparison which designates the *modus essendi* but without increase or excess; such a mode is not of itself the basis (*principium*) of a construction, although by reason of another mode of signifying which exists in this same positive form, i.e. that of being an *adiectivum*, the positive degree can be a *principium constructionis*; in other words the positive degree is the 'unmarked' term and does not require another *nomen* for support in a syntactic function, e.g. he is clever - whereas the comparative does require another *nomen*, e.g. he is cleverer than X.

The comparative degree is the mode or the degree of comparison which expresses the *modus essendi* of the positive form along with its increase or excess. Siger tells us that Priscian <sup>(1)</sup> described the comparative as what is implied by the positive in conjunction with the adverb 'magis', i.e. indeterminate increase and indeed some adjectives have only this means of expressing such an increase. Siger continues that comparison cannot refer to 'one', and therefore the *nomen proprium* which possesses the property of one cannot be compared, and similarly the *nomen appellativum* cannot be compared, because 'magis' cannot be found in

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(1) Priscian (III,1): *comparativum est, quod cum positivi intellectu vel cum aliquo participio sensu positivi 'magis' adverbium significat: ut 'fortior', magis fortis.*



substance and therefore nomina signifying substance cannot be compared <sup>(1)</sup>; this leaves only the adiectiva which alone can be compared, and along with the gen<sup>d</sup>er and number which the adjective acquires from the nomen substantivum, these features of gradus, genus and numerus stress the separability of the adjective from the substantive and at the same time confirms the dependence of the adjective on the substantive that it qualifies. Siger adds a further refinement; 'magis' indicates a relative position between two contraries <sup>(2)</sup>, so that only adiectiva appellativa signifying quality or quantity can be compared. It may well have been this restriction which induced Thomas to list the comparative (as well as the positive and superlative) among the modi specialissimi of the adiectivum. We might therefore describe this definition of comparison as a 'logical justification' of a formal description of Latin sentence structure, especially as we are given no grammatical expression of "less" and "least".

The comparative is a principium constructionis with the ablative of either number because anything which signifies by means of the mode of excess can be properly constructed

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.99: magis non determinatur inesse nisi per respectum ad substantiam, adiectiva solum comparantur et non substantiva seu abstracta.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.99: quia 'magis' attenditur penes accessum et recessum a contrario, quod solum in qualitate reperitur, vel penes extensionem in quanto, quod solum quantitati advenit, ideo nomina appellativa adiectiva significantia aut qualitatem aut quantitatem solum comparantur.



with anything which signifies the thing as that from which the excess is taken <sup>(1)</sup>; (we shall see that the ablative can be in a quasi-formal manner as possessing the form 'ut a quo') <sup>(2)</sup>. The comparative can also be constructed with the nominative, but in that instance, the adverb 'quam' which is the adverb of comparison or analogy must be used as in "Achilles est fortior quam Eneas"; Siger adds that in this case the comparison is achieved more by virtue of the adverb 'quam' than by the comparative itself. In conclusion, almost as an afterthought, Siger adds his belief that the nominative is governed by means of a verb understood rather than by the comparative <sup>(3)</sup>, i.e. in the form "quam Eneas (est)", and such a possible use of the verb 'est' produces a much more linguistically satisfactory explanation.

The superlative designates the modus essendi of the positive in so far as it is in excess which in this instance is the partitive <sup>(4)</sup>; the partitive is constructed with the genitive, the superlative is therefore constructed with the genitive, and since the partitive does not refer to one but

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.99: omne id quod significat rem suam ut a quo exceditur, et quia ablativus utriusque numeri significat rem suam ut "a quo", ideo comparativus cum ablativo utriusque numeri congrue construitur.

(2) cf. p. 296.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.99: credo tamen nominativum magis regi a verbo subintellecto quam a comparativo.

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p.99: superlativum est gradus comparationis designans circa rem positivi modum essendi prout est in vi excessus, et esse in vi excessus respectu aliorum illam formam participantium est quod partitivum.



to many, the superlative will be constructed with the genitive plural or with the genitive singular of a collective nomen, e.g. fortissimus gentis. Siger refers to Priscian's description of the superlative as whatever, compared to many of its kind, is placed above them all (1), or <sup>else</sup> ~~stated in more simple terms~~, it is whatever combines with 'valde', i.e. 'very' together with the positive form, i.e. optimus = valde bonus.

(c) Genus.

Priscian and more particularly the mediaeval grammarians had moved a long way from the formal definitions of Thrax and Donatus; it would seem that Donatus had based (2), to a large extent, his description of the Latin system of gender <sup>on Thrax's description of gender</sup> as "one of the concord categories of sentence structure" (3), and it would also seem reasonable to suggest that Donatus, in listing the genders of Latin as he did, i.e. masculine = hic magister, <sup>f</sup> ~~f~~ gemenine = haec musa, neuter = hoc scamnum, common = hic et <sup>f</sup>

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.99: superlativum est vel quod ad plures sui generis comparatum omnibus superponitur, vel, per se prolatum, intellectum habet, cum 'valde' adverbio, positivi.
- (2) Donatus: genera nominum quot sunt? Quattuor. Quae? Masculinum, ut hic magister, femininum, ut haec Musa, neutrum, ut hoc scamnum, commune, ut hic et haec sacerdos. Est praeterea trium generum, quod omne dicitur, ut hic et haec et hoc felix; est epicoenon, id est promiscuum, ut passer, aquila.
- (3) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.99; who continues, that "gender is grammatically a category of concord and not the reflection of sex or inanimacy was noted by the scholiasts who pointed to gender marking as one of the functions of meanings of the article"; such a statement seems much truer of Donatus than of Priscian and their mediaeval commentators.



haec sacerdos, and hic et haec et hoc felix <sup>(1)</sup>, and epicene = passer, aquila, had in mind that there is here a system analogous to the Greek system of using gender marking as one of the functions of the article <sup>(2)</sup>.

Priscian introduced the idea of generation in his description of gender <sup>(3)</sup>, which may well account for Thomas's statement that the ancients (antiqui) had defined gender as the difference of sex (discretio sexus), which means, according to Thomas and stated in his terminology, that genus is the mode of signifying derived from the active or passive property which is more readily and definitely found in separate things <sup>(4)</sup>. As a preamble to this definition of genus, Thomas had stated that two general properties, i.e. the property of acting and that of suffering, are to be found in all things compounded of matter and form, but these properties belong more readily and distinctly to separate things; the first property is that of generating and the

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(1) Donatus actually refers to this as 'omne genus'.

(2) R.H. Robins, T.P.S.(1957), p.99.

(3) Priscian, V.141: genera nominum principalia sunt duo quae sola novit ratio naturae, masculinum et femininum. Genera dicuntur a generando proprie quae generare possunt, quae sunt masculinum et femininum.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #69: genus est modus significandi nominis, sumptus a proprietate activa, vel passiva, quae in rebus separatis magis prompte et determinate invenitur.



second of suffering (1). In other things these properties are indifferently or indistinctly found. This duality of gender is entirely in keeping with the Modistic conception of things and material reality which contain the two properties of acting and suffering which are to be found in all compound but equally all separate things. Gender therefore for Thomas is the active mode of signifying by means of which the nomen signifies either the property of acting or suffering or both of them (2).

Siger took from Priscian the idea of 'engendering' in his description of genus (3); Priscian had said (4), according to Siger, that the natural scheme of things recognized two genders, i.e. masculine and feminine - these are the two principal genders and all the others are called 'genders' by virtue of their being predicated to the two principal genders (5). Genus is therefore so called from

- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #69: in rebus inveniuntur duae proprietates generales, scilicet proprietas agentis, et proprietas patientis, quae licet in omnibus rebus ex materia et forma compositis inveniuntur, tamen in rebus separatis magis prompte et distincte videntur inesse; quorum unum est determinate generans, et alterum determinate patiens.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #69: genus est modus significandi activus, quo mediante nomen proprietatem agentis, vel patientis, vel utrumque significat.
- (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.100: dicitur genus a generando.
- (4) Priscian (VI): genera igitur nominum principalia sunt duo, quae sola novit ratio naturae, masculinum et femininum. Genera enim dicuntur a generando proprie quae generare possunt, quae sunt masculinum et femininum. Nam commune et neutrum vocis magis qualitate quam natura dinoscuntur, quae sunt sibi contraria.
- (5) Siger de Courtrai, p.100: alia dicuntur genera per attributionem ad ista.



the process of procreating, and in such a process we find the male (masculus) which possesses the active power of procreation and the female (femella) which possesses the passive power (1). Once more we see a common doctrine in the Modistae; though Thomas and Michel do not go quite so far as Siger in ascribing the powers of procreation to the masculine and feminine, they both affirm the active and passive nature of the masculine and feminine, and gender can, therefore, be defined Modistically as the accidental mode given to the nomen for signifying the active and passive force or for signifying that force which is indifferent to either of these other properties (2), and thus in terms of these properties, gender is differentiated by means of the masculine, feminine, neuter, common etc.; common, dubium and epicene refer to different and not separate genders.

Of the various genders of the nomen, the masculine is the mode of signifying by means of the active property, i.e. the agency in the case of Thomas (3), and in the case of Siger it designates the modus essendi of the male, i.e. the

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.100: masculinum genus, genus est nominis designans circa rem modum essendi masculi seu potentiae activae generationis...femininum est genus nominis designans circa rem modum essendi femellae ratione passivae generationis.
  - (2) Michel de Marbais: genus est modus significandi datus nomini ad designandum rem sub modo essendi virtutis active vel passive vel indifferentis ad utrumque.
  - (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #10: genus masculinum est modus significandi rem sub proprietate agentis, ut vir.



active power of procreating; similarly, the feminine gender is the mode of signifying the passive acceptance of an act (1), i.e. in Siger's terms the passive participator in the act of procreation. The neuter is the mode of signifying that property which is indeterminate and does so without reference to either the masculine or the feminine (2); Siger explains that its name 'nec utrum' is derived from the fact that it signifies the *modus essendi* of neither the masculine nor the feminine.

Neuter gender must not be considered as representing the absence of the properties of the masculine and of the feminine, since to do this would imply that the neuter was not a mode of signifying but a fiction (*figmentum*); the neuter merely refers to a property which is neither masculine nor feminine; nor can it be considered as common gender since, in such an instance, it would refer to all three genders, i.e. masculine, feminine and neuter and would signify by means of the property '*omnis generis*' (3).

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #70: *genus femininum est modus significandi rem sub proprietate patientis, ut mulier.*
  - (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #70: *genus neutrum est modus significandi rem sub proprietate neutra, quae est indeterminata, et indifferenter ad utrumque.*
  - (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #71: *quidam dicunt, quod neutrum genus sit modus significandi rem sub privatione utriusque proprietatis. Quo posito, vel genus neutrum non erit modus significandi, sed figmentum; vel a privatione accipietur, quae nullius est causa; quae ambo sunt inconvenientia.*



Thomas defined common gender as the mode of signifying by means of either property, active or passive <sup>(1)</sup>, i.e. it is the gender which differs neither from the masculine nor the feminine. Siger tells us that Priscian divided common gender into bi-partite, e.g. *hic et haec sacerdos*, and tri-partite, e.g. *hic et haec et hoc felix*, which Donatus called 'omne' - Thomas follows Donatus in this and has a small sub-section which he called an adiectivum 'omnis generis' because it can be assigned to a substantive or either masculine, feminine or neuter gender <sup>(2)</sup>. This becomes yet another criterion for the adjective <sup>(3)</sup> and furthermore, as we shall see in the section on the syntax <sup>(4)</sup> the dependence of the adjective on the substantive in terms of gender and number is an integral feature of the construction. Siger describes the bi-partite type of common gender as the gender which embraces the *modus essendi* of the masculine and feminine while actively designating the *modus essendi* of the thing under consideration; it is used in

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #70: *genus commune est modus significandi rem sub utraque proprietate determinate, ut homo.*
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #72: *adiectivum...omnis generis potest attribui substantivo masculini generis, feminini, vel neutrius, ut felix.*
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #71: *hoc tantum convenit adiectivis, quae genus non habent ex proprietate suae rei subiectae, sed ex proprietate rei substantivi nominis.*
- (4) cf. 5.24.



constructions of either the masculine or the feminine and yet is distinct from them just as the whole is distinct from the parts (1): the tri-partite form of common gender designates the modus essendi actively and at the same time embraces the modus essendi of the masculine, feminine and neuter and is used in constructions of all three genders (2). It is interesting to note that both Siger and Thomas provide us, unconsciously with a purely formal definition of this common gender by means of their description of the paradigm of the adjective in two or three genders, ~~with a purely formal definition of this common gender~~, though it has to be conceded that they have based their description on Priscian who, though a 'literary' grammarian, defined the partes orationes and their components in semi-formal terms.

Epicene gender is defined by Thomas as possessing the masculine and feminine <sup>but</sup> ~~and~~ designated by means of <sup>the</sup> ~~one~~ <sup>expression</sup> ~~member~~, e.g. hic passer, haec aquila (3). Siger defines it, etymologically, as 'supra commune' in that it will signify by means of one member and will designate one of the modi essendi of one of the genders found in the common category but will

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.101: omne duorum est genus nominis designans circa rem modum essendi actualiter et simul et includentem modum essendi masculini et feminini et amborum servat constructionem et distinguitur ab eisdem sicut totum a partibus.
- (2) Siger and Thomas say nothing about anomalous, irrational or inanimate genders.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #73: (genus epicoenum) habet masculinum et femininum genus sub uno articulo designatum.



do so mixedly as in the case of 'piscis', since it may convey the modus essendi of either the masculine or feminine, so that it is signified with reference to a masculine gender and yet imply the feminine as in 'piscis' or the converse may be the case as in 'aquila' (1).

The final sub-division of gender is the dubium genus, which can designate separately a modus essendi or either the masculine gender or the feminine, which means that it can occur sometimes in a masculine construction and at other times in a feminine construction, e.g. hic et haec dies, hic et haec finis, and this too might be briefly described as a formal description of this particular gender.

Genus is a principium constructionis and as such demands concord of gender, i.e. masculine with masculine; the reason for this is two-fold: (a) the male and female cannot exist together in a thing in mutual symmetry but the male requires the male and the female requires the female, and (b) whatever depends on something else for its essence, acquires its essence from it and as a consequence its generation will be

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.100-1: epicoenum dicitur promiscuum, quia mixtim seu promiscue modum essendi masculini et feminini importat; ideo aliquando significatur sub modo essendi masculini, ut..piscis, nihilominus tamen, modum significandi feminini mixtim seu promiscue importat, et aliquando significatur sub modo essendi feminini, tamen mixtim seu promiscue modum masculini importat, ut.. aquila.



thus ordained (1); now adiectives derive their essence from their substantives and therefore they must be of the same essence as their substantives. Siger concludes that a thing can possess several modi essendi or properties because such properties belong to things and there can be several accidents particular to the one thing; therefore one and the same thing, designated by reference to different modi essendi, can be of more than one gender.

(d) Numerus.

This is, of course, a well known category which refers to the inflections of the nomen in terms of quantity. The Modistae are in entire agreement on the nature of numerus, though their terms inevitably show minor variations, i.e. Siger defines number as the accidental mode which designates the property of one or many (2), while Thomas states that it expresses the property of indivisibility or divisibility (3).

Siger continues that one or many are aspects of quantity and refers therefore to Priscian that numerus is the form

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.101: illa quae dependent in esse ab aliquibus, ab illis habent esse et per consequens generationem ordinatam ad esse.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.101: numerus est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi unius aut multi.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #17: in utroque numero duae proprietates inveniuntur, scilicet: proprietas indivisibilitatis...et proprietas divisibilitatis.



of the word (dictio) which can express differences of quantity <sup>(1)</sup>; he also refers to Peter Helias who suggested that because ~~the~~ the mode of signifying presupposes the vox, therefore numerus can be expressed in two ways, (a) according to the thing so that singularity or plurality will be signified or (b) according to the realisation (vox) which is the form of the word from which it can be established whether the expression refers to one or to more than one <sup>(2)</sup>. This can be construed as a formal statement of number.

Thomas bases his definition of number on Boethius who had stated according to Thomas, that the 'numerus' existing in things outside the mind represents a multitude of many unities collected together <sup>(3)</sup>, which is close to Michel de Marbais's definition of numerus as the accidental mode given to the nomen to designate the thing in the form of the property of active unity or active multiplicity <sup>(4)</sup>. However, Thomas

- (1) Priscian, V.172: numerus est dictionis forma quae discretionem quantitatis facere potest.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.101: numerus..dicitur..secundum vocem prout est forma dictionis ex qua discernitur utrum ad unum vel ad plura pertineat locutio.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, # 79: numerus in rebus extra animam, secundum Boethium, est multitudo ex unitatibus aggregata, et profusa.
- (4) Michel de Marbais: numerus est modus significandi datus nomini ad designandum rem sub modo essendi actualis unitatis vel actualis multitudinis.



points out that unitas can be considered as having <sup>a</sup>two-fold representation, the first of which refers to the singleness, the indivisible oneness of the thing, and thereby reveals the 'multitudo' as one out of a very great number (1) - this is the "numerus essentialium", and by means of this the multiplicity of the different species of things is reckoned. The second representation of unitas refers to the unbroken continuity of the thing - this is the "numerus materialis", and by means of this the individual differences within the species are reckoned (2). In this context, therefore, the numerus essentialium refers to the different types of nomen, while the numerus materialis refers to the different individual nomina with each type of nomen.

Thomas continues that in both numbers two properties are found, i.e. the property of indivisibility which is found in the thing by virtue of its unity (quae est in re ratione unitatis), and the property of divisibility which is found in the thing by virtue of the multitudo which is revealed by the repetition of the unity (quae est in re ratione multitudinis, quae ab unitatis replicatione profunditur);

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #15: ab ista unitate multoties iterata profunditur multitudo, quae est unum de transcendentibus, ut ens, et unum.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #76: ab ista unitate multoties reiterata profunditur multitudo, quae numerus materialis vocatur, id est individuorum secundum differentiam materiale differentium.



from these properties in the nomen numerus is derived. Numerus is therefore the accidental mode of the nomen which signifies the property of indivisibility which is the property of one and the property of divisibility which is the property of the plural (multitudo) (1).

Singular number is the mode of signifying by means of the property of indivisibility, i.e. the property of one (2); this is all that Thomas tells us, which Siger also confirms, but the latter dwells at greater length on the nature of the singular number. Number, this way, is similar to the number of various forms but not to the number which is a species of a definite quantity; such a number is really more ~~than~~ the basis of a number rather than a number itself because strictly speaking a number cannot be found in one (3); singular number should not properly be called a number, unless it were argued that it is called number, (a) because any material increase of it creates a number, and (b) because all numbers are constructed from it or resolved in it.

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #77: numerus est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, mediante quo nomen proprietatem indivisibilitatis, quae est proprietas unius, vel proprietatem divisibilitatis, quae est proprietas multitudinis, significat.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #78: numerus singularis est modus significandi rem sub proprietati indivisi, quae est proprietas unius, ut homo.
- (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.101-2: numerus..habet similitudinem cum numero formarum, extendendo formam ut prius extensum est unum, et non cum numero qui est species quantitatis distinctae, et quia ipsum unum est magis principium talis numeri quam numerus eo quod in uno proprie numerus non reperitur.



Plural number is the mode of signifying by means of the property of divisibility which is the property of 'multitudo',<sup>(1)</sup>. Because the concept of many or number increases infinitely by means of the addition of unities, then plural number, as Siger quotes from Priscian, is infinite <sup>(2)</sup>, and as a result numeral nomina were devised to determine this stated infinity.

Siger concludes that number is the basis (principium) of a construction of the adiectivum and the substantivum and of the appositum with the suppositum, because those elements which are dependent on something else for their being (esse), will be equally so as far as number is concerned; adiectiva depend on their substantiva just as accidents depend on their substance, and equally then, the adiectiva depend on the substantiva in so far as numerus is concerned. In other words, elements which use number as an accidental mode, evolve syntactic relations with verbs and other partes orationis, but also demonstrate a mutual dependency within the word class to which they and this accidental feature belong.

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #18: numerus pluralis est modus significandi rem sub proprietate divisi, quae est proprietas multitudines, ut homines.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.102: multum seu numerus crescit in infinitum per additionem unitatis...idea numerus pluralis est infinitus.



(e) Casus.

This is, of all the accidental modes of the nomen described by the Modistae, the most difficult to analyse and assess; the reason is that whereas the other accidental modes of the nomen were described in terms which were fairly solidly and consistently semantic with a formal suggestions added occasionally, one might say fortuitously, there seems to be real confusion in the criteria for case, which renders any exposition problematical; an additional complication is that, for once, there seems to be no one single Modistic case theory which can perhaps be explained by the fact that in this particular instance they seem to have fallen between the two extremes, i.e. of reproducing in their own semantic terms the ideas of their predecessors or of trying to produce something entirely new. What has happened is that Siger describes a case theory which can be described as an account vaguely reminiscent of his models, but it is an account which is completely unsystematic and does not reproduce by any means all the criteria which had been presented in the grammars which had been his models; the result is an exposition of the cases of Latin in terms which are partly functional, partly semantic, with a half-hearted attempt to add formal justification to his categories by making use of the pseudo formal criteria of "ut quod" etc. Thomas seems to have tried to open new territory; he too makes use of this pseudo formal criteria "ut quod" etc., but he too fails because he has



been content with vague semantic criteria to justify his distinctions of the cases with the more formal criteria of word order as a functional, i.e. syntactic feature, and furthermore he has ignored morphological criteria which would of course have justified his more functional approach to case theory.

Thrax had listed the cases of the Greek noun on a semantic basis, though his case system is morphologically based (1). Priscian too retained a morphological definition of case, which he described as the declension of the nomen or other words possessing a case feature (2). The Modistae, as we have said, ignored morphology altogether as a feature of case, and indeed it should be noted that they abandoned altogether the use of case of a positive feature in their definitions of the nomen or as a negative feature in their definitions of the verb, though the Greeks and Priscian had included case as a criterion for the nomen and the absence of case as a criterion of the verb (3); Michel de Marbais did retain however, a purely functional approach to case by insisting on the concord of the cases in any construction (4).

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(1) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.100.

(2) Priscian, V.183: casus est declinatio nominis vel aliarum casualium dictionum, quae fit maxime in fine.

(3) R.H. Robins, A & M. pp.40: 65.

(4) Michel de Marbais: casus est principium alicuius constructionis cum in unione constructibilium requiratur proportio vel convenientia casuum invicem.



There is then little similarity between the case theories of Thomas and Siger. Siger follows the line adopted by the Greek grammarians and Priscian, that the nominative is the starting-point and that all the other cases are in fact derived from the nominative and are therefore in opposition to the nominative. Siger has nothing to say about a possible morphological analysis of case but does make a little use of the pseudo formal criteria of the analogy of the different forms of 'quod', but this is far from satisfactory data since this 'ut quod' criterion merely represents a definition of the different cases based on the translation equivalent of 'quod', 'cuius', etc. Siger does provide certain definitions of the different cases according to their uses, but this is unsystematically presented and not exhaustively described; furthermore there is no attempt to set up a case theory based on the oppositions created between the various cases, and which had been achieved by the Greek grammarians, e.g. Apollonius. Hjelmslev refers to the systems of oppositions described by Greek and Byzantine grammarians (1) which constitute the essential of their theories but nothing of such a systematic nature is found in Siger - nor for that matter in Thomas.

According to Thomas, every case of the nomen is defined by means of two criteria, (a) whether it is the mode of

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(1) L. Hjelmslev, La Catégorie des Cas. pp.1-13.



signifying of the first or final constituent of the construction, i.e. *proprietas principii et proprietas termini*, and (b) according to the morpho-semantic criterion of its analogy to the inflections of 'quod'. Therefore, the nominative signifies as the first member and is as 'quod' is; the vocative signifies as the final member only but has no special formal distinguishing features; the genitive signifies as either member with the formal mark of 'cuius', and similarly, the dative possesses the formal mark of 'cui', the accusative the formal mark of 'quem', and the ablative the formal mark of 'a quo'. The formal features of the cases of the nomen will be paralleled by a similar concord in the government between the verb and the case-form. As we have said, Thomas does attempt to make word-order a functional criterion for each case, so that each case is defined by its syntagmatic function which will vary according to whether it is the first or final element in a syntagm, e.g. "Socratis interest" shows the genitive as the first element in the syntagm and in "misereor Socratis" as the final element in the syntagm (1). These are the only general criteria that Thomas uses, and he makes no attempt.

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(1) The difference between these two constructions and Thomas's use of 'principium' and 'terminus' is discussed in the section on syntax, cf. 5.24, and also in the section on the technical vocabulary of the Modistae, cf. 3.13.



to define the cases of the nomen in any further detail or in terms of their mutual dependence or independence (1).

Case for Thomas is the accidental mode of signifying which consignifies, i.e. connotates the two common properties of principium and terminus (2), which, as we have argued, suggests that principium and terminus are syntactic values attached to relative word-order. For Siger, case is not quite so complicated; he defines it in semantic terms as the accidental mode which designates the ending of the nomen and also the way that the mode of being of the thing subject to declension is expressed and understood (3). The Modistae continued to divide case, as Donatus and Priscian etc. had done, into six component cases of nominativus, genitivus, dativus, accusativus, vocativus, and ablativus.

The nominative case is so called, according to Siger, for two reasons: (a) because it leads from its own ending to other endings, and (b) because it can create other cases, and

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- (1) Hjelmslev looks upon the dependence and independence of cases as one of the major contributions of the Byzantines to case theory, cf. La Catégorie des Cas, pp.11-12.
  - (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #5: casus est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, mediante quo, nomen proprietatem principii, vel termini consignificat.
  - (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.104: casus est modus significandi accidentalis designans circa rem modum essendi cadentis, inquam rei, intellectus et vocis, seu eiusdem nominis.



hence it possesses the quality of leading <sup>(1)</sup> and by so doing creates all the other cases <sup>(2)</sup>. This case is called the nominative because naming is done by means of it.

The nominative case, however, according to Thomas, is the mode of signifying which belongs to the first constituent of a construction, its morphological shape belonging to the pattern of "ut quod". Thomas makes no reference to the nominative with the copula or to its use in instances such as "Socrates vocatur philosophus"; in his discussion of the constructions, he refers to the type of construction e.g. "sum albus" and "voco Adrianus" as intransitive personarum constructions <sup>(3)</sup>, in which the verbum substantivum i.e. 'sum' and the verbum vocativum i.e. 'voco' are determined by a declinable pars orationis; the implication that the dependence between the two constructibles is a 'backwards'

(1) This definition of the nominative case goes back to the Stoics, cf. R.H. Robins, A.&M., p.32. "The Stoics fixed the use of term 'case' as we have it today; the nominative was 'the upright case'... and the rest were 'oblique'".

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.104: nominativus dicitur casus, tum quia cadit a sua terminatione in alias, tum quia facit alios casus, tum naturam habet ut cadere, possit et cadendo facit omnes casus, quippe cum casus non dicitur solum illud in quo cadit aliquid sed etiam ipsa res quae cadit.

It will have become clear that the accidents of the nomen have been listed and described by the Modistae in terms of the properties of the res, vox, and intellectus with no clear and real distinction made between inflectional and derivational categories, a tendency apparently general in antiquity, cf. R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.98.- The modes of absolute and respective however do suggest a definite step in the direction of making a distinction between derivational and inflectional categories.

(4) cf. 5.2413.



relationship but he has nothing specific to say about the use of the nominative in such constructions. Thomas tells us, furthermore, that in the construction "Socrates amat", the nominative 'Socrates' becomes the first member of the construction with the verb 'amare' by virtue of the property "ut quod est alterum", which implies that the nomen 'Socrates', because of its morphology is the nominative but also that it is, in conjunction with 'amat', different from 'Socrates' in isolation (1) - hence the 'alterum'. In the construction "Socrates amatur", 'Socrates' remains in the same relationship, i.e. ut quod est alterum to the dependent verb with the same morphological shape, and the passive nature of the verb does not alter the one-to-one relationship between the verb and the nominative case. Thomas refers to Peter Helias to support his definition of the nominative case based on morphological scatter, i.e. Peter Helias argues that the cases are derived according to the pattern of the inflections of 'quod', cuius, cui ', etc. and although Thomas had to add a semantic reflex to his statement, i.e. that this mode of signifying is called the nominative because in this mode names (nomina) are given to things, it must be conceded that Thomas's main criterion for the nominative and for its discreteness from all the other cases was the property of 'ut

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(1) M. Heidegger, *Op.cit.*, p.196: (In) "Socrates amat", Sokrates ist Principium der Bestimmung 'lieben', er ist zugleich in seiner Identität als Sokrates ein Anderes, ihm Zufallendes, er liebt, ist liebender Sokrates.



quod est alterum'.

The nominative is the principium constructionis i.e. of an intransitive (1) construction with a finite personal verb, because such a verb signifies by means of the mode 'ut illud' (2) which has important implications for the congruence of the nomen and verb or the suppositum with the appositum, since a verb in the mode of signifying 'ut illud' will be predicated to a nomen which designates the mode or property 'ut quod' (3). Throughout his discussion of case, Thomas has fragmentary suggestions about case concord and rection between the verb and case, i.e. in the nominative, the concord will be 'ut ipsum est alterum' on the pattern of 'ut quod' as a morphological feature of the nominative, since the concord of this verb, whether active or passive, is governed by the nominative (4). This is an important statement, since it implies that the form, i.e. the nominative,

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- (1) This is the Modistic use, not the traditional use of the term 'intransitive', cf. 3.13.
  - (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.104: iste modus significandi est principium constructionis intransitivae cum verbo personali finiti modi, quia tale verbum significat rem suam per modum significandi 'ut illud' qui circumloquitur per personam et modum finitum.
  - (3) Siger de Courtrai, p.104: modus significandi 'ut illud' apponitur modo nominativi designantis modum 'ut quod'.
  - (4) Thomas of Erfurt, #87: huic modo proportionatur in verbo modus, ut ipsum est alterum, scilicet: principiatum, et causatum a re nominativi active, vel passive.



is demanded by the rection of nominative and verb.

According to Siger the genitive case is so called because it possesses a natural bond (*naturale vinculum*); based on the morphological criteria of being, it can be deduced from the nominative (1) because all names (to the Greeks) used to come from it (2), and by analogy and response to the form 'cuius'.

The genitive, according to Thomas, is the mode of signifying of both the first and final constituent in a construction and possesses the form of 'cuius' from the property 'ut cuius est alterum' (3). In the construction "Socratis interest", the genitive form 'Socratis' signifies as the first member i.e. as the logical subject with reference to the verb 'interest' (4) and in the construction "misereor Socratis", it functions as the second member i.e. as logical object and grammatical oblique nominal form with reference to the verb 'misereor'. In his definition Thomas stated that the genitive signifies differently according to the property of principium or terminus; in the first instance, it seems to be the subject, at least the logical

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.104: *genitivus casus dicitur genitivus tum quia naturale vinculum possidet, tum quia nascitur a nominativo et generat alios obliquos.*
  - (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.104: *apud Graecos omnes denominationes ab eo solent fieri.*
  - (3) Thomas of Erfurt, 488: *genitivus est modus significandi rem in ratione principii, vel termini differenter, proprietate, ut cuius est alterum, superaddita.*
  - (4) cf. 5.24 where Thomas discusses the use of the genitive as the suppositum in an intransitive construction.



subject of 'interest' and in the second, it functions as the oblique of 'misereor', i.e. the former is an intransitive construction, the second a transitive construction (1).

Siger describes at some length the genitive as a principium constructionis, e.g. of a construction suggesting possession, e.g. *capa Socratis*, or the partitive, e.g. *fortissimus Graecorum*, etc. These constructions are established on purely semantic criteria with the pseudo formal criterion of 'ut cuius' introduced in each case as confirmation, so to speak, of the genitival element in the construction. Since these constructions refer to Latin only, and seem to add nothing to the definition of the genitive case, it seems pointless to overload this exposition of the theories of the Modistae. (This seems true of Siger's description of the dative and ablative cases). Siger certainly never makes use even of Thomas's distinction of principium and terminus; in his definition of the genitive, Siger is much more orthodox than Thomas and is content to reproduce some of the ideas of his predecessors.

Siger has nothing to say about a definition of the dative except to give the formal 'ut cui' as its pattern, and leaves any discussion of the dative until he describes it as a principium constructionis; this use by Siger of 'principium' must not be confused with Thomas's use of 'principium'. They are

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(1) cf. 5.24 where Thomas discusses the use of the genitive in a transitive construction.



quite distinct, for one thing, by reason of their entirely different collocations; Siger's use of principium in principium constructionis was a device he used to define a feature by its syntactic potentialities while still analysing the feature in question as a mode of signifying of a pars orationis <sup>(1)</sup>; in this respect the use of principium constructionis is no different from any other of Siger's uses of the term i.e. to describe an additional feature of some mode of signifying. Thomas defines the dative as the mode of signifying of the first or final member according to the pattern 'ut cui est alterum' <sup>(2)</sup>, but this time it would seem that the proprietas principii or the proprietas termini does not have any distinctive semantic value, though they do have a different grammatical potentiality.

In the construction "Socrati accidit", the dative signifies as the principium and in "faveo Socrati", it signifies as the terminus, and although we are dealing with two different types of construction, according to Thomas, the meaning of the dative case, as such, is the same.

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(1) cf. the discussion of the various uses of principium by the Modistae, cf. 3.11.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #89: dativus casus est modus significandi rem in ratione principii, vel termini indifferenter, proprietate ut cui alterum acquiritur superaddita.



Siger lists four different types of construction and it is interesting to see the various criteria applied to the definition of the dative in addition to the general criterion of 'ut cui'; it proves to be a curious mixture of semantic and syntactic criteria, i.e. it signifies possession, e.g. Evandro filius fuit Pallas, or it signifies by means of the mode of favour or the contrary, e.g. fortis patriae, or it is used with adverbial forms ending in /-lis) and /-dus/, e.g. amabilis mihi, or it signifies relationship (ad aliquid), though the latter may also be constructed with the genitive.

Siger dismisses the accusative in only a few words, since it is not, he states, the basis of any construction, and he does seem to have sought to define the cases of the nomen as much by the way they were used as by the meaning of these various uses. He does, however, give us a formal definition of the accusative, that it designates the property of the thing in the form 'ut quem' (1). According to Thomas it is the mode of signifying as the final member of a construction in the form 'ut quem', e.g. amo Deum (2); in this instance the accusative signifies by virtue of its

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.107: accusativus...est casus nominis designans circa rem modum essenti 'ut quem'.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #90: Accusativus casus est modus significandi rem in ratione termini, proprietate ut quem, superaddita.



ending the act and at the same time it signifies dependency on the verb (1). There are occasions when the accusative can signify and be at the same time the first member; in such cases it involves an infinitive or impersonal verb, e.g. *me legere*, *me oportet*, and the special property of '*ut quem*' will not be introduced as an additional criterion (2). Once more we are dealing with two different types of construction, i.e. "*amo Deum*" is a transitive construction, and "*me legere*" is an intransitive construction (3), in which the accusative is complementary (4) to the verb without any special quality attached to it, which would be the case if it were functioning as the end member (i.e. terminus) of a construction (5).

Thomas adds that sometimes the accusative acts quite simply as the end member without any linking device as in

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #90: *iste accusativus, Deum, significat sub proprietate terminandi actum, et dependentiam huius verbi, amo.*
  - (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #90: *accusativus est modus significandi rem, sub ratione principii simpliciter, id est, proprietate speciali non superaddita.*
  - (3) cf. 5.24 and 5.241 where intransitive constructions are discussed.
  - (4) The use of the term 'complementary' with reference to the Modistic term of 'proportio' is discussed in 3.13.
  - (5) Thomas of Erfurt, #90: *hic significat accusativus rem, sub ratione principii a nulla proprietate speciali contracta, nec contrahibili, cui proportionatur modus verbi simpliciter.*



"lego librum"; sometimes it is linked in its position as second constructible to the first constructible by means of the preposition subject to the accusative, e.g. curro ad campum.

The vocative is based, both for Siger and Thomas, on criteria which cannot in any way be described as formal. It is, for the Modistae, the case which designates the property of excitement or vehemence <sup>(1)</sup>; it is an absolute case and is not the basis of any construction with other nomina. Thomas tells us that it is the final constituent of a construction but it must be a dependent constituent on the adverb "o"; such a dependence arises not from a syntactic relation, but from the feelings implicit in the adverb; therefore it can express no relation which will account for the absence of distinguishing morphological marks <sup>(2)</sup> as part of its criteria <sup>(3)</sup>.

Meaning, for the Modistae, became the <sup>deu</sup>criterion for the inclusion of the vocative in the case system of the nomen <sup>(4)</sup>; morphological criteria were excluded (since the Modistae never used morphological criteria), though it was in

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.107: vocativus..est casus nominis designans circa rem modum essendi excitati.

(2) L. Hjelmslev, La Catégorie des Cas, p.4.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #91: vocativus casus est modus significandi rem sub ratione termini dependentis, actus exerciti, vel exercitati, nulla differentia dictarum proprietatum superaddita.

(4) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.100.



the first place morphology that had caused Thrax to include the vocative in the scatter of cases (1). Thomas does not moreover include his quasi formal criterion of 'ut quod' etc. in order to justify his inclusion of the vocative, and syntactic criteria (though they may well be included in a negative way, i.e. in that the vocative case can never be the first constituent of a construction but fits into the position of terminus of a construction, and in reality acts semi-independently with the adverb "o") - are used only to stress the absence of any reaction between the verb and the case form as in "lege, o puer".

The formal criterion for the ablative agreed upon by the Modistae is, as Siger defines it, the *modus essendi* 'ut a quo'; Siger again defines the case by its meaning and illustrates from Latin usage, i.e. the ablative is used to demonstrate something possessed, e.g. *vir magna virtute*, i.e. a man possessing a great virtue (2). Thomas defines the ablative as the mode of signifying as either the first or final constituent of a construction and possesses the formal characteristics of 'a quo', e.g. "utor pane"; the ablative in such a constructions is the 'terminus', but in "a Socrate

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(1) R.H. Robins, *Thrax*, p.100.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.107: 'a quo' est quando aliquid habere demonstratur, ideo ablativus, *ut* sic, est principium constructionis cum omni illo quod significat rem suam per modum *ut* habens illud, ut: *vir magna virtute*, id est, magnam virtutem habens.



legitur" it is the 'principium', although its position does not seem to have any influence on the meaning, i.e. whether it is the first or final constituent, and so, according to Thomas, it signifies in the same way in either position (1). Thomas concludes that the ablative can be used with or without preposition, e.g. "in domo", "acutus oculis".

Siger has nothing to say about 'declinatio', but Thomas does add a short section on it in which he tells us that declinatio, which Donatus actually included in his consideration of case, is derived from the property of the cases and is the mode of signifying by means of which the nomen is inflected, and varies by means of the different properties of the cases (2), and becomes in fact the realisation (vox) of these different properties.

The treatment of case by Thomas and Siger is disappointingly jejune, the more so in view of the importance of the category and the possibilities that Latin case theory present to any grammarian and regardless of the criteria on which <sup>he</sup> may base his descriptive technique. It would show the Modistae in an even poorer light if we were to dwell on their inadequacies and to compare their descriptions of case

(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #2: ablativus casus est modus significandi rem, in ratione principii, vel termini indifferenter, proprietate, ut quo, superaddita.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #5: declinatio est modus significandi rem nominis, per quem inflectitur. Et variatur per diversas casuum proprietates.



to those of their predecessors. Hjelmslev points (1) in particular to the achievement of the Byzantine grammarians, in particular to Maximus Planudes, who described the cases of Greek by means of localist theory which bases its definition of case and the different cases of Greek on the abstract notion of direction; unfortunately, this theory, which anticipates much of the work on case theory of the 19th and 20th centuries, had, as Hjelmslev points out, no influence on the general development of case theory and Roman (and therefore mediaeval) grammarians followed the theories of the Stoics and Apollonius. This is lamentably clear as far as the Modistae are concerned; it is to be regretted that Michel de Marbais's work so far remains unpublished: from the extracts published in Thurot it would seem that he shows something of a localist theory of case in relation to the use of the preposition with the accusative and the ablative, but it would be wrong to make more of this than the mere sketching of a theory which is different from Thomas or Siger (2). The Modistae are even more guilty, and this is a criticism which applies particularly to Thomas, of making such little use of the theories of Apollonius and

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(1) L. Hjelmslev, La Catégorie des Cas, pp.9-13.

(2) Michel de Marbais: non solum isti casus pro accidente assignantur prepositioni tanquam servitium eius vel officium consequens eius modum significandi essentialem, sed potius tanquam aliquis modus significandi accidentalis, qui dicitur modus significandi retorquentis casuale ad actum in ratione termini terminantis vel in ratione principii initiantis.



Thrax; Siger has, like the Greeks, a general conception of case as consisting of the opposition between the nominative and all the other cases, a theory which dates back to the Stoics, but the Modistae, unlike the Greeks, do not seem to have made any use at all of the relationship between case and the voice of the verb.

It seems in fact possible to argue that there are at least two distinct Modistic case theories; Siger's is more orthodox and shows a certain kinship with the theories of the Stoics, Apollonius and Priscian, but on the other hand, Thomas's case theory appears quite new but palpably thin, and it is indeed difficult to associate Thomas's theories with any theory of the past, except perhaps Stoic theory.

It would, however, be unfair to dismiss Modistic case theory entirely because of a certain jejuneness in their exposition. Modistic case theory is not in fact devoid of interest but, paradoxically, it is not their theory of case qua case which is of interest but it is their exposition of their case theory in its relation to their wider syntactic theory, and in this sense Thomas seems to have made an important innovation, if not in case theory, then in general grammatical theory. Hjelmslev has pointed out <sup>(1)</sup> that the introduction of 'regere, regimen' brought with them a theory of

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(1) L. Hjelmslev, Principes de Grammaire générale, p.168-9.



rection which is a much broader one than their predecessors had envisaged; the Modistae, in particular Thomas, did not make any extensive use of the term 'regere' (1), but they saw the government of the verb on the nominative as well as the cases of the oblique nominal form, and Thomas built most of his case theory on the rection of the verb with the pre-posed nominative or any other case-form which, in a particular construction (2), acts as the subject, and on the rection of the verb with the post-posed oblique nominal regardless of the case, though even Thomas has to admit that the vocative cannot function in such a system. If it is feasible to argue that Thomas produced his case theory in order to demonstrate the necessary rection of all the case forms (except the vocative), it does not justify the paucity of his case theory as a description of the Latin case system, but it does suggest the recognition of a very important fact, i.e. that an inflectional system such as a case system is both syntagmatic and paradigmatic (3).

(f) Persona.

This mode represents a radical departure<sup>r</sup>, one might almost say a cleavage, between the Modistae; Thomas and, according to Roos, Martin of Dacia describe persona as the

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(1) Modistic use of this term is discussed in more detail, cf. 3.13.

(2) cf. 5.24.

(3) L. Hjelmslev, La Catégorie des Cas, p.22.



last of the accidental modes of the nomen, whereas Siger and Michel de Marbais make no mention of it whatsoever as an accidental mode of the nomen.

Thomas tells us that in rational things a certain property of the category of ~~case~~ <sup>person</sup> can be found, i.e. the property of speaking from which the feature of person is derived and as such is an accident of the nomen. Persona is therefore the mode of signifying of the nomen by means of which the nomen consignifies, i.e. connotates the property of speaking <sup>(1)</sup>; as a result of the difference of the speech whether it is 'de se', i.e. of oneself, 'ad alium', i.e. to another, or 'de alio', i.e. of another, the person will vary in a similar threefold manner, the first person being the mode of signifying by means of the property of speaking of oneself, the second person being the mode of speaking to another person, and the third person the mode of speaking of another person.

Thomas concludes his very short discussion of persona with a strange piece of etymology, no doubt to explain what is, at least, the equally strange fact of including persona as an accidental mode of the nomen. He states that because

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #94: persona modus significandi nominis, mediante quo nomen proprietatem loquendi consignificat. Et secundum diversitatem loquendi, de se, ad alium, vel de alio, variatur persona per triplicem differentiam, scilicet: primam, secundam et tertiam.



the mode of speaking of oneself is not without a mode of signifying 'de se', then this mode is called persona, named from "per se sonando" (1).

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #94: quia modus loquendi de se non est sine modo significandi de se, ideo ipse modus dicitur persona, a per se sonando nominata.



5.112 Verbum.

In the classical period and the early Middle Ages, there tended to be a divergence between the grammarians and logicians in their definitions of the nomen and verbum; in the 12th century, with Peter Helias, we can discern a marked change in the definition of the verbum, and Peter represents an attempt to combine the definitions of Aristotle and

Priscian, the leading exponents in the western world of the logical and grammatical traditions, into one definition of the verbum. After Peter and during the 13th century and with the Modistae, we find a further refinement in the definition of the verbum in which certain criteria were no longer considered the principal features of the verbum; we also find contemporary metaphysical considerations introduced as criteria to replace the more traditional features of the definition. We reach thus an interesting point at which the definitions of the Modistae have replaced the traditional grammatical elements with their own metaphysical ideas and at the same time, the traditional logical elements are either omitted or modified by new grammatical considerations, e.g. the features of becoming, succession and flux (esse, fieri, successio and fluxus) replace the features of action or being acted upon (actio and passio) used by the ancient grammarians, and the feature of 'tempus' which was the logician's principal criterion is relegated to the



accidental modes of signifying, affirmation is ignored except by Michel de Marbais though this had been a feature of Aristotle's definition, and the feature of separation from the substantial element, i.e. the nominal element (in contrast to the participium which can adhere to the nominal) is introduced; in other words the traditional logical SP relationship now becomes a grammatical feature, i.e. it is not so much that the nomen and verbum are to be segregated in order to express the predication of an action or condition (1), but rather to express, in quasi formal terms, the separation of the verbal member from the nominal member which exemplifies syntactic dependence (2) of the verbal element on the subject nominal element (3).

Why there should have been such a divergence between the logician and the grammarian cannot be a matter for discussion at this point, but it must be pointed out that the logician needed only the nomen and the verbum to express his essential S and P relationships, whereas the grammarian,

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(1) R.H.Robins, A.& M., p.18.

(2) This term is discussed in 3.13 in relation to the verb as well as its general use in Modistic syntactic theory. This is, in addition, an important philosophical concept involved which induced the Modistae to consider dependence as a grammatical matter in the noun-verb relationship, especially the S P favourite sentence type; the concept in question derives from 'ens' and 'esse', the features which constitute the essence of the nomen and verb; 'ens' must precede 'esse' since some thing has to 'be' before it can 'become', i.e. be talked about.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: omne verbum requirit aliquid in ratione suppositi quod dependentiam eius sustentat.



especially the early Middle Ages, is heir to a system of grammatical description which possesses many more partes orationis than does the logician, and which were set up for a different purpose. Thrax and Apollonius had established their word-classes on formal criteria, especially Thrax (1), and they had in addition ensured the analysis of the word-classes into the now traditional eight, i.e. noun, pronoun, verb, participle, adverb, conjunction, preposition, and article (in the case of Greek) or interjection (in the case of Latin). Priscian followed Apollonius in his definitions of the partes orationis, and apart from a slight divergence on the part of Apollonius himself (2), this analysis in formal terms survived until the Middle Ages, i.e. the time of Peter Helias, and from the time of the Stoics and the scholars of the schools of Alexandria, grammar was until the later Middle Ages considered a separate branch of knowledge (3).

This dual development is seen quite clearly from the definitions of the logicians and grammarians; Plato defined the verb in terms of its predicability on the nomen, but

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(1) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p. 96.

(2) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p. 43.

(3) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p. 25.



Aristotle first (1) introduced the concept of 'time' into his definition of the verb, and it was this definition of the verb which was followed thereafter by the logician (2). Beginning with Thrax and continued by Apollonius, an entirely different definition of the verb was used by the grammarian, i.e. the verb is a part of speech without case-inflection, admitting inflections of tense, person and number, signifying an activity or a being acted on (3); although tense was not by any means excluded, the definition relies on the morphological distinction of the case-inflection of the noun and the absence of the case-inflection in the verb along with the definition of the verb signifying an action or being acted on. This is the definition used by Priscian and Donatus, the only difference between them being that Priscian includes the features of tense and mood (4) and Donatus the features of tense and person (5), whereas Thrax had referred particularly to the features of

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(1) R.H. Robins, *A.&M.*, p.23.

(2) Boethius: *Verbum est*, quod consignificat tempus, cuius pars nihil extra significat, et est semper eorum quae de altero praedicantur, nota... Verbum distat a nomine in hoc solo quod nomen sine tempore est...verbum vim temporis in significationibus trahit. Peter Abaelard: *Verbum est illud quod consignificat tempus...id est significat nomen inhaerens personae cum temporali adverbio, sibi adiect(iv)o in constructione, ut 'currit' significat 'cursum' cum temporali adverbio* cf. p.80-2:120-4 for the discussion of 'consignificatio'.

(3) R.H. Robins, *A.&M.*, p.40.

(4) Priscian (VIII,1): *verbum est pars orationis cum temporibus et modis, sine casu, agendi vel patiendi significativum.*

(5) Donatus: *verbum est pars orationis cum tempore et persona sine casu aut agere aliquid aut pati aut neutrum significans.*



tense, person and number. The grammarians of the Middle Ages, until Peter Helias, followed Priscian or Donatus as can be seen quite clearly in the definitions of Aelfric, Bede, Cassiodorus, Isidorus, etc., (1)<sup>and</sup> it is interesting to note that Alcuin, although he refers in the first place to the Aristotelian definition, teaches (and defines) the verb (2) according to the model established by Priscian.

With this link back to the Greek grammarians, who themselves were conscious of Greek as a literary language, and the close association, for Priscian and the grammarians of the early Middle Ages, between grammar and literature and the complete divorce of grammar and logic during this period, it becomes quite futile to look for logical terms in their grammars, and terms such as 'subiectum', 'praedicatum', 'suppositum', 'appositum', etc., are not likely to be found in the works of these earlier grammarians. Enough has already been said of the change and the causes for the change in the relationship in the 12th century between grammar and the other disciplines and the change in the attitude to grammar on the part of contemporary scholars (3); but apart from anything else, it led to the introduction of logical

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- (1) Aelfric: verbum est pars orationis cum tempore et persona sine casu aut agere aliquid aut pati aut neutrum significans. Cassiodorus: verbum est pars orationis cum tempore et persona sine casu: verbum aut agentis aut patientis habet significationem.
- (2) Alcuin: verbum est vox significativa, secundum placitum, cum tempore, definitum aliquid significans et accidens... verbum est pars orationis cum temporibus et modis, sine casu, agendi vel patiendi significativum.
- (3) cf. p. 19. fn. 5: 34-9.



terminology into grammatical description as well as the introduction of metaphysical and philosophical considerations into the description of grammatical features.

In the 12th century the controversy between the nominalists and the realists (1) had drawn attention to the inter-relationships between the structure of language and the structure of things, so that the Modistae, who were, like their contemporaries, moderate realists, accepted that the modes of signifying were not just mere vocal noises or figments of the mind but did have correlation with the world of reality; it was during this period, so Prantl maintains (2), that the word 'copula' was first introduced into logic by Abelard (3), although the term had already, again according to Prantl, been implied by Boethius in his commentaries on Aristotle. This term came to be used to designate the substantive verb 'esse' (4) which linked the two terms of a logical statement, and logicians began to refer more and more to the function of a 'substantive verb'. A parallel development in grammar seems, according to Thurot (5) to have

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(1) cf. p. 40-44.

(2) C. Prantl, Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande (vol.II), p.196.

(3) Abelard: *harum itaque aliae sunt categoriae, i.e. praedicativae...aliae hypotheticae, i.e. conditionales... est autem categoricarum natura secundum membra sive species demonstranda; sunt autem membra, ex quibus conjunctae sunt, praedicatum ac subiectum atque ipsorum copula* (my italics), secundum hoc scilicet, quod verbum a praedicato seorsum per se accipimus...verbum vero interpositum praedicatum subiecto copulat.

(4) Ch.Thurot, Op.cit., p.177. "les grammairiens furent conduits à ajouter à la définition du verbe le complément que leur fournissait la logique, et les logiciens insistèrent plus que leurs prédécesseurs ne l'avaient fait sur la fonction remplie par le verbe substantif".

(5) Ch. Thurot. Op.cit., p. 178.



resulted from Priscian's translation of 'hyparxis' as 'substantia' and 'hyparktikon rhema' as 'verbum substantivum'; this, according to Thurot, seems to have lead to an understanding of 'verbum substantivum' not as a verb signifying existence but as a verb meaning substance. (Such a confusion seems to have been carried on into the 13th century, when definitions, e.g. that the verb 'est' does not signify an action or being acted on but substance, can still be found (1)). It has been shown in the section on the nomen (2) that permanence and repose were substituted for substance as the criteria for the nomen and similarly change and becoming instead of action and passion became the criteria for the verb, the terms used by the Modistae being 'ens' in the nomen and 'esse' in the verb; to this change can be related the metaphysical implications of the dependence of 'esse' on 'ens' to which reference will be frequently made in this section, i.e. an 'ens' has to be before it can become (esse) anything. It has been said already on many occasions that the mediaeval grammarians, influenced as they were by contemporary logic and philosophy, made use of logical and metaphysical criteria to explain a grammatical

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(1) Hoc verbum 'est' actionem et passionem non significat sed substantiam. An anonymous MS of the 13th century which I shall refer to as Digby 55; I must acknowledge the very kind loan by Dr. R.W.Hunt, Keeper of Western MSS in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, of his transcript of this MS.

(2) cf. p. 214-16.



feature, and it becomes reasonable to argue that two considerations at least lead to the change in the criteria of the nomen and verb, (a) to avoid the confusion between 'substance' and 'existence' which had arisen out of Priscian's use of 'verbum substantivum', and (b) the metaphysical implications of the dependence of 'esse' on 'ens'.

Such a change began, it would appear with Peter Helias who sought to combine the logical tradition of Aristotle and the grammatical tradition of Priscian by arguing that the verb makes a statement about the other element <sup>(1)</sup> (i.e. the suppositum) of the perfect construction, and at the same time it expresses an action, etc. with the idea of duration by means of the tense placed on a secondary level. <sup>(2)</sup>

By the 13th century, the idea of change and becoming, as was pointed out in the section on the nomen <sup>(3)</sup>, came to replace the idea of action and passion as the principal features of the verbum; this must not be taken to mean that the idea of action and passion was dismissed from the verb,

(1) Aristotle had described 'affirmation' as one of the principle features of the verb.

(2) Peter Helias: reperta sunt verba ad designandum quid de altero dicitur et primo propter actionem et passionem... omne verbum formam actionis passionis significat, id est agere vel pati...verbum consignificat tempus qualitative - 'cucurri' significat quidem 'currendi' principaliter, sed quando secundario.

(3) cf. p. 214.



but they merely came to be looked upon as aspects of movement and becoming which now took their place as the principal criteria of the verb. (1)

Thus with the Modistae, we find a definition of the verbum which is quite different from both Priscian's and Aristotle's. The verb signifies becoming, change, flux and shares this feature with the participium as a general essential mode; by means of its specific mode, it signifies as a member of a proposition but one which is separate from its subject, and in this it is distinguished from the participle, which can 'adhere' to the subject as a result of the adjectival nature of some of its features (2). This is a logical restatement of a grammatical tradition which distinguished the verbum and the participium in Latin as separate word-classes. It is interesting to compare this logical description of the two partes orationis with Jespersen's theory of junction and nexus (3).

Just as the Modistae came to accept the 'permanent' nature of the nomen in place of the traditional 'substantial' definition, so the Modistae replaced the traditional definition of the verb as action and being acted on by the counterpart to the permanent and static nature of the nomen,

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(1) Digby 55: verbum significat motum vel fieri quia significat conceptum aliquem sub proprietate motus vel fieri et sicut motui vel fieri accidit actio vel passio, et sicut modo significandi per modum motus vel fieri accidit modus significandi actionis vel passionis, ita significato verbi accidit agere vel pati.

(2) cf. p. 393.

(3) O. Jespersen, The Philosophy of Grammar, p.108 et seq.



i.e. the verb represented for them flux, succession and becoming; in other words, the two principal partes, for such were still the nomen and the verbum to the Modistae, represent the opposition of 'ens' and 'esse'. The Modistae did not abandon substance as a feature of the nomen, nor did they deny that a verbum could signify action or passion, but they no longer included them as items in the description of the essence of the verbum. They were not, however, the originators of this, because already in the 13th century, grammarians had begun to dispute action and passion as the characteristic of the verbum; 'Digby 55' shows this quite clearly; what is interesting is to see the transition already at work, by which 'motus' and 'fieri' are in the process of replacing 'actio' and 'passio' which are in fact made to belong to 'motus' and 'fieri' (1). By the time of the Modistae, the change had been completed and 'motus' and 'fieri' (or 'fluxus' and 'successio') in the verbum were accepted as the counterparts of 'habitus' and 'permanens' in the nomen.

There is acceptance among the Modistae of the broad outlines, but there are a few minor variations though not nearly so many as in the nomen, and once again we find a division between them which has been encountered on more than one occasion. Thomas and Martin seem to be in

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(1) cf. p. 214: 303: 309-11.



complete agreement in their definition of the verbum as the pars orationis which signifies by means of the mode of being separated from the substance (1), while Siger and Michel, although they too refer to becoming (fieri) etc. as the characteristic feature of the verbum, rejecting 'actio' and 'passio', retain aspects of older definitions (2). They both suggest that the verb must say something about the nomen; this has already been referred to (3), because 'ens' (i.e. the nomen) must precede 'esse' (i.e. the verb) since there must be something (ens) before there can be any 'becoming' (esse). The verb will thus become, as we shall see in the section on syntax (4), along with the nomen the constructible elements in constructions which will constitute the favourite sentence type of suppositum and appositum, since the nomen and verb combination in the S P construction represents the minimal constructible pair - this type of favourite construction can be traced back to the Greek grammarians. Hence Michel defines the verb as the pars orationis which signifies by means of the mode of becoming and which is potentially able to express something about the other constructible (5). This is very reminiscent of the Platonic

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~¶~~117: verbum est pars orationis significans per modum esse distantis a substantia.

(2) Siger uses "modus fluxus, fieri seu motus, seu esse" in that order to describe the essence of the verb, but Thomas uses only "modus esse".

(3) cf. p. 304, fn. 2.

(4) cf. 5.24.

(5) Michel de Marbais: verbum est pars orationis significans per modum fieri de altero dicibilis.



definition of the noun and verb; moreover there is in Siger a suggestion of the Aristotelian and contemporary logical definition of the verbum, i.e. as consignifying tense (1) which is totally absent from Thomas.

Roos refers (2) to the Aristotelian and logical tradition as defining the nomen as the modus esse and the verbum as the modus fieri; Roos implies here (though he makes no actual statement to this effect) that there was once more a wide divergence between the grammarian and the logician, because Thomas and Siger state quite explicitly that the modus esse is, along with the modus fieri, an essential feature of the verbum. The answer may well lie in the fact that 'esse' for Aristotle and the Schoolmen did not mean quite the same thing, but that is outside the scope of this thesis.

There is another fact which reveals an interesting difference between Thomas and Siger, and which suggests that in some ways Siger is much more conservative than Thomas. Roos says, rightly so (3), that the whole history of the definitions of the nomen and verbum, back to Aristotle and Priscian, means that the analysis of these two partes will be much richer in content than that of the other six partes

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: verbum est quod consignificat tempus et est semper nota eorum quae de altero dicuntur.

(2) H. Roos, Op.cit., p.146.

(3) H. Roos, Op.cit., p.146.



orationis. What is revealing is the hold that tradition seemed to have had on Siger, who described first the nomen and then the verbum, and which he did quite deliberately; in contrast to this, Thomas describes the nomen and then the pronomen, presumably because they have many essential features in common before embarking on an analysis of the verbum. Siger explains that 'esse' refers to an action peculiar to 'ens' (1), and since the nomen signifies by means of the modus entis and the verbum by means of the modus esse, then the verbum must follow the nomen. In view of Siger's analysis of the four declinable partes in the form of two 'archipartes', one of which is characterised by 'ens' and the other by 'esse', it would seem much more reasonable and logical to describe together the two declinable partes which were members of the same archipars; that Siger did not do this and preferred to describe the two principal partes, i.e. the nomen and the verbum, in that order before coming to the other partes, suggests that he was more bound by tradition than he was prepared to follow up the implications of his theory of the 'archipars'. Thomas, on the other hand, came after Siger and one cannot help feeling that he had

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: esse est proprius actus ipsius entis; cum nomen significat rem suam per modum substantiae seu entis, et verbum per modum significandi fieri seu esse, verbum immediate debet sequi ipsum nomen.



succeeded to a great extent, both in his descriptions and in the plan of his work, in throwing off the incubus of tradition, though this should not be interpreted as implying that Siger is at all inferior to Thomas as a grammarian.

We can say, then, that there was a large measure of agreement among the Modistae on the nature of the verbum; in contrast to the nomen, which signifies by means of the mode of permanence and repose, the verbum signifies by means of the mode of change and becoming which in turn implies action or passion (1). This opposition between the nomen and verbum might be described as one of different essences; there remains a further opposition which concerns the verb, i.e. the opposition between the verbum and the participium since they too have essential features in common, and which must be expressed in their definitions. The difference between the nomen and verb remains one of essence despite the fact that there may be a relationship between 'ens' and 'esse' which may on occasion create problems (2), but this does not alter the fact that their essences are different, and for this reason their consignifications (3) will be

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(1) Michel de Marbais: propter quod intelligendum est verbum significat actionem vel passionem pro tanto quod ipsum significat, quicquid significat sub modo essendi vel proprietate fluxus vel fieri, qui quidem est modus actionis vel passionis, eo quod omnis actio vel passio est in quodam fluxu vel fieri sive in quadam transmutatione. Sicut quicquid permanet per naturam substantie permanet, sic quicquid fluit vel in fieri est per naturam actionis vel passionis sive motus fluit vel in fieri est.

(2) cf. p. 328-30.

(3) cf. 4.1.



different: the verb and the participle share the same matter, i.e. the *modus esse*, but differ by reason of the form which means that the participle can have some of the same consignification, i.e. syntactic meaning, but cannot ever be the appositum in an SP construction - this difference is however created by the form which cannot affect the matter <sup>(1)</sup>, i.e. the essence of the two partes. The verbum signifies by means of the mode of separation from the substantial element, i.e. the nominal suppositum, in contrast to the participium which, because the participium can also possess features like those of an adjective <sup>(2)</sup>, will signify by means of the mode of adhering to the nominal suppositum.

Siger adds one further fact about the verbum which is full of interesting and important implications which have, however, not been fulfilled since his work is incomplete. He states that the verbum signifies by means of the *modus fieri*, which is quite in keeping with the other *Modistae*; he adds, however, and this is the interesting implication since it suggests a great deal about his syntactic theories

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(1) The terms *materia* and *forma* should, in this context, not be confused with substance; a *pars orationis* consists of its essence and its distinctive feature, e.g. in the nomen, the *modus entis* is the essence and the '*determinata apprehensio*' is the distinctive feature. The terms *materia* and *forma* are used as members of a binary opposition, which the *Modistae* used descriptively to distinguish the essence and the distinctive feature, so that *materia* is the term used to symbolise the essence and *forma* to symbolise the distinctive feature - in this instance the '*determinata apprehensio*'.

(2) cf. 5.1131.



which might well have developed on lines closely similar to those of Thomas (1), that the mode of becoming is dependent (2) and that every verbum signifies by means of a mode of signifying which is dependent (*modus significandi dependentis*); this dependence of the verb refers to the philosophical problem of dependence, which has already been discussed (3), since a verb requires something that it can talk about, something that the verb can be capable of asserting, which, as we shall see (4) is one of Michel de Marbais's requirements for the verb. This means that no verbum will be the subject of a verbum and that every verbum will therefore require something in the nature of a subject (*suppositum*) in order to support such a dependence (5). This suggests a form of syntax which might well have been very similar to Thomas's, because, as we shall see (6), in every construction there is a dependent constructible; in an intransitive construction, it is the second constructible as in "Socrates

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(1) cf. 5.24 and 5.211.

(2) cf. p. 96

(3) cf. p. 96.

(4) cf. p. 323-4.

(5) Siger de Courtrai, p. 108: *omne verbum significat rem suam per modum fieri, et ipsum fieri est dependens, ideo omne verbum significat rem suam per modum significandi dependentis et per consequens nullum verbum, in quantum tale, poterit supponere verbo, immo, omne verbum requirit aliquid in ratione suppositi quod dependentiam eius sustentat.*

(6) cf. 5.241 and 5.242.



currit" which is the dependent and in a transitive construction, it is the first constructible as in "video Socratem" which is the dependent; in both cases, however, the verb has been the dependent element and this is very similar to Siger's statement. Siger makes, as we have said, the verbum always a dependent of the suppositum; this suggests that his syntax might well have been to a very large extent the SP (suppositum-appositum) of traditional logic, but it also suggests that Siger was less interested in the minutiae of syntax, especially of Latin syntax, than Thomas was.

5.1121 Modus significandi essentialis verbi.

It will be apparent already that there is between the Modistae a great measure of agreement on their grammatical doctrine and that such divergences as do exist are really matters of presentation. Furthermore, it is quite clear, that once their premisses have been established, there is considerable consistency in their analytical procedure, though looking at their grammatical methods from the standpoint of the 20th century, one can see the flaws which one can readily find in their system, or for that matter, in any linguistic descriptive system based on notional, semantic and metaphysical criteria, and which appeals merely to their predecessors to support their arguments.



The weakness of their system is revealed sharply by the need the Modistae felt to rationalise apparent exceptions in their system, e.g. privatio and figmenta as members of the nomen-class <sup>(1)</sup> and the position of the verbum substantivum in the verbal system <sup>(2)</sup>; it is this type of rationalisation which reveals perhaps their greatest failing, i.e. their grammatical procedure claimed universality and yet needed to indulge in such tortuous arguments in order to justify certain exceptions to their statements.

The structure of their presentation of the verbum, however, reveals that consistency to which reference has just been made; it will be remembered that in the essential mode of the nomen, Siger stated his criteria for the essential mode, divided into general and specific, in a very succinct manner, and then allows himself much more space in which to expatiate on the accidental modes; in contrast to this, Thomas presents his modus generalissimus which is, in effect, an equivalent statement to Siger's general and specific modes, before beginning his more detailed description of the ~~pas~~ in question by means of the modus subalternus which he continues to refine by means of the modus specialissimus. Thomas's approach to the whole problem of defining

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(1) cf. 5.111.

(2) cf. 5.112.



the essential mode might be said to represent a contrast of theory and practice; in the *modus generalissimus* he states his theoretical criteria for establishing this particular *pars* and in the *modus subalternus* and *specialissimus* he merely seeks to describe in detailed grammatical terms the application of this philosophical theorising to the *pars* in question, i.e. we find a contrast between philosophical theorising and grammatical description. Once this has been done, he is then free to deal with the accidental modes.

The procedure in the *verbum*, then, is exactly the same as in the *nomen*, and it will facilitate this exposition of Modistic doctrine, if the same plan is followed in this section on the essential mode of the *verbum*. The diagram in Appendix C shows the different presentations of Siger and Thomas of the essential mode of the *verbum* and at the same time permits us to see that the final result is the same. As in the *nomen*, we see then that Siger's *modus generalis* and *specificus* are the equivalent of Thomas's *modus generalissimus* and that Thomas's *modus subalternus* and *specialissimus* consist of refinements which Siger does not discuss at all. In order to present a unified statement on the essential mode of the *nomen*, it became necessary to displace some of Siger's accidental modes and consider them along with Thomas's *modus subalternus* <sup>(1)</sup>; in this exposition of the

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(1) cf. 5.1111.



verbum, no such change in order of presentation has been necessary in order to achieve unity of subject matter.

As in the nomen, Siger uses his general essential mode to describe a feature which is possessed by more than one pars orationis, in this instance the verbum and the participium, and Siger defines this mode as the mode of flux, becoming, movement or esse (1); it is the essential mode since it refers to the essence of more than one pars. It is very similar to Michel's general essential mode which he describes as the mode of flux and becoming (2) and it is also very similar to a description of the general essential mode of the verbum to be found in the Digby MS (to which reference has already been made) (3). The modus specificus is used by Siger to distinguish a particular pars from all the others; therefore Siger gives as the specific mode of the verbum the feature of separation or discreteness from the substance, i.e. the nominal element (4), and this also serves to segregate the verbum from the participium which, of all the other partes orationis, is closest to the verbum

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: modus significandi generalis essentialis verbi est modus significandi per modum fluxus, fieri seu motus, seu esse, quod idem est extendendo ista sicut prius modus significandi entis extendebatur.
  - (2) Michel de Marbais: modus significandi fluxus vel fieri.
  - (3) Digby 55: significatum verbi est significare conceptum aliquem sub modo fieri vel motus, ex qua proprietate motus vel fieri accipitur modus fieri inclinabilis ad substantiam..non est modus specificus sed essentialis generalis.. in hoc communicant verbum et participium.
  - (4) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: modus specificus verbi est modus significandi essentialis de aliquo seu significare per modum distantis vel facientis alterum extremum orationis.



by virtue of a common general essence, as has just been stated. This is one of the many instances, and reference will be constantly made to this particular feature, of the use of the matter-form contrast to produce a grammatical opposition. Siger does not make very much use of the terms 'materia' and 'forma' but this does not mean that he avoids the actual opposition; in actual fact, his use of the *modus generalis* and the *modus specificus* as sub-modes of the essential mode, and this is shown quite clearly if we compare his statements to those of Thomas who does use the terms 'materia' and 'forma', can be considered the equivalent of the matter-form contrast. In this respect, i.e. the definitions of the essential modes, Siger goes much further than Thomas, in that he, Siger, quite clearly uses this contrast (though he never says so specifically) to distinguish the general and specific modes of the indeclinable partes and, by implication, to distinguish the indeclinable partes themselves - this Thomas does not do. It is interesting to note that Michel's special mode is not quite the same as Siger's, whereas the Digby MS is <sup>(1)</sup>; Michel reverts, as has already been suggested <sup>(2)</sup>, to the older logical tradition of the verb being capable of asserting

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(1) Digby 55: *specificus est modus inclinabilis ad substantiam in ratione distantis et alterius extremi.*

(2) cf. p. 318.



something (1), his argument being that what is in a state of flux or becoming can be predicated of the subject (2). Michel admits that separation (distantia) is a feature of the verbum, otherwise it would not be capable of making any assertion (3), but he denies that it is an essential mode of the verbum, his argument being that such distantia does not refer to any discreteness by the actual designation of whatever process the verb refers to, i.e. this discreteness is not in the mind, but rather to the actual physical separation of the verbum from the nomen (4). The participle is near to the verb in meaning and some syntax, but is distinct from the verb with regard to the minimum SP sentence structure of Latin; in other words, the participle and the verb can stand in a one-to-one relationship but the participle cannot constitute the appositum in the favourite SP sentence type of Latin. Reference has already been made on several occasions to Siger's theory of the 'archipars'; it is not possible to state with absolute certainty, from the

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(1) Michel de Marbais: modus significandi dicibilis de alio.

(2) Michel de Marbais: illud quod est in fluxu vel fieri est aptum natum dici de subiecto vel enunciari. Unde habet proprietatem vel modum essendi de alio dicibilis.

(3) Michel de Marbais: verbum significat sub ratione distantis, eo quod omne illud quod enunciat de altero in oratione distat ab eo.

(4) Michel de Marbais: remotio situs verbi a situ nominis.



few extracts available in Thurot, whether Michel suggests any similar theory, though there seems every likelihood that he did, but it does seem true from the two extracts just quoted that the author of the Digby MS sought to organise his material in such a way as to suggest an embryonic theory of the 'archipars' very similar to Siger's (1). Thomas's *modus generalissimus* combines these two modes of the other *Modistae*, and defines the essential mode of the *verbum*, as we might expect from the definitions given by the others, as the mode of signifying by means of the *modus esse* and the mode of separation from the substance - a definition which is identical to Martin of Dacia's (2). In the *nomen*, the characteristic had been the *modus entis* and it was pointed out that this mode operates in contrast to the *modus esse*, which represents the mode of flux and succession and which is the other common property found, as Thomas tells us, in things (3), the first being the *modus entis*, and is in opposition to the property of repose and permanence; it must be remembered that this dichotomy of *ens* and *esse* is fundamental to *Modistic* grammatical theory.

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- (1) It would be inappropriate to say more since this MS is clearly pre-*Modistic*, and the material is not ordered in the same systematic way as the *Modistae* did.
  - (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #110: *modus significandi generalissimus essentialis verbi est modus significandi rem per modum esse, et distantis a substantia.*
  - (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #24: *in rebus invenimus quasdam proprietates communissimas sive modos essendi communissimos, scilicet modum entis, et modum esse.*



It is revealing to note that neither Siger nor Thomas could entirely exclude syntactic material from their descriptions of the essential modes of the verbum; this is not to suggest that this should be construed as a flaw in their grammatical method, far from it, but it does represent a weakening in the rigour of their whole approach, especially Thomas's (1). Siger, in describing the specific mode of the verbum, in which distantia is the important and distinguishing factor, reinforces his argument by stating that the verbum will become the other members of the construction (alterum extremum orationis) in contrast to the participium which can join with the suppositum, i.e. the participium has certain adjectival qualities (2) and will not thus be discrete from the suppositum.

Distantia thus becomes their way of expressing this syntactic feature and is an especially valuable distinction since the participle can be endocentric with either the suppositum or the appositum. Thomas employs syntactic criteria as a justification for his modus generalissimus, so that the modus esse of the verbum will be proportionate, i.e. ~~the~~ complementary to the modus entis, i.e. the mode of repose and permanence which will be found in both the suppositum and in the oblique, i.e. terminant constructible.

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(1) This is rather like certain modern linguists who rigorously eschew meaning as a criterion in linguistic analysis and then appeal to meaning to produce the final and decisive argument.

(2) cf. 5.1131.



It was pointed out in the section on the nomen (1) that the Modistae owed a great deal to classical logical tradition for the metaphysical basis on which they constructed their two principal partes, nomen and verbum; Michel de Marbais was the only one of the Modistae to exclude 'ens' from his description of the nomen and so too in the verbum he is the only one to exclude 'esse' from his definition, and again, just as in the nomen he stood closer to the older classical definition, so too in the verbum he is much closer to the older logical statement of the assertability of the verbum. Siger and Thomas both consider 'esse' to be one of the principal criteria - indeed for Thomas it is, apart from distantia, the only one, whereas Siger refers to action and passion as features of the verbum, though not as features of the essence of the verbum. Another debt to their philosophical background was the constant use the Modistae made of the dichotomy of matter and form, and once more they have recourse to it to clarify the difference between the verbum and the participium; Siger's use of it is less overt and should be deduced from earlier statements - his whole scheme, as far as the essence of a pars is concerned, rests on the division of the general and specific modes, and in his description of the specific mode of the nomen, Siger refers to it as the formal aspect (2).

(1) cf. 5. 1111

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.96: qualitatis seu formae est distinguere, in quo modo significandi nomen differt a pronomine.



and it is by means of the formal aspect that the nomen is differentiated from the pronomen; if this is true, then the same should apply to the verbum and the participium, and although Siger does not actually make use of the actual terms 'matter' and 'form' to differentiate the verbum and the participium, Thomas confirms by his analysis that matter does refer to the general mode and that form refers to the specific. Thomas argues that the modus esse represents the material element which brings the verbum and the participium together but that separation (distantia - Siger's criterion for the specific mode) represents the formal element and thus segregates the verbum from all the other partes orationis (1). By combining these we produce one mode, in this case the modus generalissimus - this is quite in keeping with scholastic metaphysics.

We saw in the section on the nomen that the Modistae showed great skill in applying their metaphysics to their grammatical theories, but that this also left them with the serious problem of reconciling metaphysics and grammar, which they did by resorting to metaphysics, the final result being that the inadequacy of their non-formal grammar is brought out into very sharp relief. A similar problem arose

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #110: comparando verbum ad participium, modus esse habet rationem materiae, respectu verbi, quia facit verbum cum participio convenire; sed facere convenire est proprietas materiae; modus distantis habet rationem formae, quia facit verbum ab omnibus aliis distare et differre.



in the verbum, and Thomas was faced with the problem of reconciling the statements that if 'esse' implies flux and succession, what then is the succession in the use of the verb in "Deus est"; Thomas finds a solution by resorting to tortuous arguments about the non-temporal but eternal nature of the succession implied in the statement "Deus est", i.e. that the eternal has to be imagined in terms of the temporal (1). This is a long way from descriptive linguistics and it is mentioned in detail to show some of the problems which a grammatical theory, relying almost entirely on non-linguistic and metaphysical criteria, can create for itself. The copula, also appears to have presented an awkward problem for the Modistae which their morpho-semantic descriptive technique was quite clearly incapable of answering except by resorting to non-linguistic arguments, or else by using formal criteria to explain something which semantics could not do (2). We have had occasion already to mention the use made by the Modistae of the matter-form.

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, ¶112: licet esse Dei...non sit successivum successione temporis, est tamen successivum successione aeternitatis; et licet aeternitas sit tota simul et perfecta possessio...tamen, quia intelligimus ex istis inferioribus, ideo imaginamur ibi successionem et durationem aeternitatis per diversa spatia temporis.
- (2) The whole problem arises from the argument that 'distantia' cannot be used as a general criterion for the verb, since 'esse' does not signify anything essentially distinct from any 'ens', because anything distinct from 'ens' would be 'non ens' Thomas of Erfurt, ¶116: dicendo 'ens est', esse non significat aliquid essentialiter distinctum ab omni ente, quia quod est essentialiter distinctum ab ente est non ens.



contrast and with particular reference to the sentence "ens est" (1); it was shown that in this particular instance the most satisfactory explanation of the difference between 'ens' and 'est' was by means of the formal criteria of potential word-order. To dwell on these problems would be burdensome and adds nothing to Modistic theory of the verb; for this reason, they have, to all intents and purposes, been excluded from this exposition.

Modus significandi subalternus verbi.

If it is reasonable to argue that the general essential mode of the verb is described along lines similar to the description of the equivalent mode of the nomen, it is equally reasonable to suggest that the modus subalternus of the verbum will be identical in pattern to the modus subalternus of the nomen. It will soon be realised that this is what we actually do find.

As in the nomen, the modus subalternus of the verbum is peculiar to Thomas but this time it has not been necessary to include certain material, i.e. some of Siger's accidental modes (2) for the sake of a unified description of their grammatical doctrine. It will be remembered that Thomas had described the substantivum and adiectivum, which Siger

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(1) cf. 3.11 where 'materia' and 'forma' and their use as grammatical technical terms are discussed; in the same section, the use of 'ratio' as an indication of potential word-order is discussed, since the Modistae seem to have considered word-order to be grammatically relevant.

(2) cf. 5.1111, p. 231-4: 227.



had classified as accidental modes, as modi subalterni and specialissimi of the nomen; in order to make a unified statement on Modistic theory, it was decided to include the consideration of Siger's accidental modes of substantivum and adiectivum along with our description of Thomas's subaltern modes and modi specialissimi. Thomas derived these modi subalterni and specialissimi from Donatus's 'accident' of 'qualitas', and in Donatus's scheme this accident of qualitas does actually produce different types of nomen; it is a characteristic of Thomas's system that the modi subalterni and specialissimi will be used to catalogue the various types of word which constitute the particular pars orationis in question. The structure of their presentation, and especially of Thomas's, is to use the general essential mode to define the pars in question and to use the modus subalternus and specialissimus to describe its sub-classifications in semantic terms, i.e. an inventory of the various types, in this instance, of the verbs which constitute the stock of that pars orationis, the verbum.

The modus generalissimus is divided into three modi subalterni, only one of which will be sub-divided into modi specialissimi; the first subalternus refers to verbs such as 'sum' which is otherwise referred to as a verbum substantivum. The verbum substantivum is capable of specifying some special being while signifying by means of the modus



esse (1); unlike the verbum neutrum (2) it is also capable of being contracted to some case form, and it is as a result of its contractability with its post-posed case-form that it becomes a verbum substantivum, not because of the feature of 'per se stantis' which characterises the nomen substantivum, but because it signifies some being and is also capable of further specification by means of a post-posed nominal form (3), so that 'vocator' ~~can be a verbum substantivum but~~ becomes a verbum vocativum with the post-posed nominative form which in this instance acts also as the 'further specification' of the verbum substantivum as well as being the specification of the verbum vocativum. The second modus subalternus contains verbs such as 'vocator' and are known as verbum vocativum. The verbum signifies the general property of naming which will be specifiable by means of the special property of naming which will be brought to it by means of the dependent constructible (4), e.g. vocor represents the general quality of naming but it becomes specific with the addition of the dependent as in

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #118: verbum substantivum est, quod significat per modum esse generaliter, specificabile per quodlibet esse speciale.

(2) cf. p. 334.

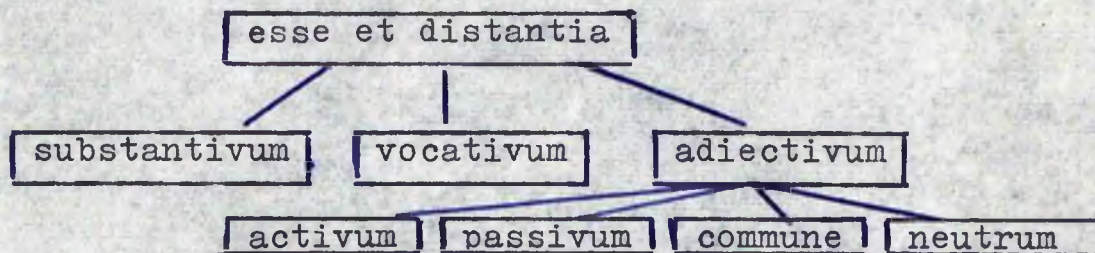
(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #118: dicitur substantivum, non ex modo per se stantis, sed quia significat esse generale specificabile; ideo potest stare specificativum cuiuscumque specificantis ipsum.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #119: verbum vocativum significat nominationem in generali, specificabilem per quamcumque nominationem propriam in speciali.



"voco Adrianus". The third modus subalternus would seem to refer to all other verbs, differentiated by their modi specialissimi, since all verbs in this category which constitutes the verbum adiectivum, possess the ability to signify action or passion, which was, as we have seen, long considered the principal feature of all verbs.

The verbum adiectivum is divided into four modi specialissimi, i.e. modus actionis, modus passionis, modus neutri and modus utriusque and constitute the verbum activum, passivum, neutrum and commune. The whole process from the modus generalissimus to the modi specialissimi can be presented diagrammatically thus:



These modi specialissimi constitute in modern terms, verbs which are active transitive, passive transitive, intransitive and active and passive, but it must be stressed that the inherent criteria for these verb-classes are purely semantic, i.e. the verbum adiectivum activum signifies 'action' only (1), e.g. amo, while the verbum adiectivum passivum signifies 'being acted on' only (2), e.g. amor. We shall discuss very shortly

(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #121: verbum adiectivum activum est, quod significat tantum actionem ut amo, doceo.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #122: verbum adiectivum passivum est, quod significat passionem tantum, ut amor, doceor.



the difference between these modi specialissimi which, by virtue of their inherent semantic criteria, constitute verbs which signify 'action' or 'being acted on' and the accidental mode of genus, which, by virtue of imposed quasi formal criteria, refers to the nature of the relationship between the verb and any post-posed<sup>s</sup> nominal oblique form. It is interesting to note, and yet Thomas is quite consistent in this, that he excludes the verbum deponens as a modus specialissimus of the verbum, since there are no criteria at all, in terms of its essence (not even morphologic, though Thomas seems, on this small point, to have moved outside his frame of reference in order to reinforce his argument (1)), for setting up the verbum deponens as a separate verb-class. The verbum commune signifies both action and being acted on, e.g. *crimonor te* and *criminor a te*. The verbum neutrum, or in modern terms, the intransitive verb, signifies neither action nor being acted on (2), e.g. *vivo*, i.e. it signifies by means of the absence (*privatio*) of action or passion rather than by means of some positive attribute expressed by means of some mode of signifying. More important still is that the verbum neutrum is contractable with itself, i.e. it is self-contained but will not be used with any post-posed oblique form (3).

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, #125: verbum deponens non potest esse distincta species ab activo et passivo, nisi per terminationem vocum, quod non est specie differre, cum plures partes orationis possint in una voce et terminatione convenire.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #123: verbum neutrum est, quod nec actionem, nec passionem significat, ut *vivo*.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, #124: verbum neutrale significat esse contractum de se, non contrahibile, ut *vivo*, significat esse absolute secundum esse vitae.



The modus specialissimus represents the full semantic quotient which combines to make up the essence of each of these verbs; if we take the verb 'amo', we see that it contains as its essence, (i) esse, (ii) distantia as the modus generalissimus (or the modus generalis and specificus to use Siger's terminology), (iii) it is a verbum adiectivum by means of its modus subalternus, and (iv) it signifies action by virtue of its modus specialissimus - this can be interpreted as a positive feature even for a verbum neutrum, which by virtue of its modus specialissimus may not signify action or being acted on. This process of development from the modus generalissimus to the modus specialissimus can be described in diagram form for all the four kinds of verbum adiectivum:

modus generalissimus		modus subalternus	modus specialissimus		
esse	distantia	adiectivum	actio	passio	privatio actio/passio
amo *	*	*	*		
amor *	*	*		*	
Vivo *	*	*			*
criminator *	*	*	*	*	



Reference was made (1), in discussing the nomen to a procedure in Thomas's analysis of the *modus subalternus*, which suggested that the *modus subalternus* will be a special mode with respect to the *modus generalissimus*, i.e. it will describe features of the essence of the *pars* which serve to individualise it, but that the *modus subalternus* will be at the same time a general mode with respect to the other modes, i.e. the *modi specialissimi*, since a general mode will refer to its essence even if it transcends one *pars orationis* in doing so. This is confirmed by the fact that the *modus subalternus* of the *participium*, as we shall see (2), can be divided into *participium substantivum*, *vocativum* and *adiectivum*. Even more important perhaps, is that this underlines the fact that the establishment of the *modus subalternus* and its sub-divisions is made on semantic criteria alone and that morphologic and syntactic criteria are excluded. These *modi specialissimi* represent different types of verb, the distinction being treated as a purely semantic one: in 'genus' two formal criteria are involved, (a) morphological, since the difference between the active and passive genus is that the active ends in /-o/ but can be changed to /-r/ and the passive ends in /-r/ but can be changed to /-o/-- (meaning is introduced but only as a secondary criterion), and (b) syntactic, since these verbs can have the following possible

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(1) cf. p. 228  
 (2) cf. 5.1131.



relationships:

- (a) active - pose-posed oblique nominal
- (b) passive - post-posed nominal oblique governed by a preposition
- (c) neutrum - no possible relationship
- (d) commune - either (a) or (b)

But these relationships are expressed by the accidental modes of significatio and genus. The absence of morphologic and also syntactic criteria in establishing the *modus specialissimus* is thus in striking contrast to the accidental mode of genus <sup>(1)</sup> in the *verbum*, and these sub-divisions of the *verbum adiectivum* serve to illustrate the fact that all the essential modes represent the semantification of mainly formal distinctions which the *Modistae* inherited from Priscian; for this reason semantic criteria will take pride of place although syntax is admitted occasionally, but only as a last resort.

We can summarise the essential mode of the *verbum* thus; the *modus generalissimus* is sub-divided into three *modi subalterni*, which are in effect the *verbum substantivum*, the *verbum vocativum* and the *verbum adiectivum*. The *verbum adiectivum* is further sub-divided into four *modi specialissimi* which constitute the *verbum activum*, the *verbum passivum*, the *verbum neutrum*, and the *verbum commune*. Just as the *modus generalissimus* leads to the *modus subalternus*, which

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(1) cf. p. 359-68.



in turn is divided into the modi specialissimi, so the verbum considered simply as such can be divided into the verbum substantivum, vocativum and adiectivum, the last named sub-dividing into verbum activum, passivum, neutrum and commune; this last sub-division of the modi specialissimi should not be confused with the accidental mode of 'genus' in the verbum <sup>(1)</sup> since genus, i.e. voice is the accidental voice by means of which the quality of the relationship between the verb and the post-posed oblique is made <sup>(2)</sup>, but then modi specialissimi merely represent different types of verb, i.e. it is the further refinement of the modus subalternus; the VN relationship is entirely another matter.

#### 5.1122 Modus significandi accidentalis verbi.

We found in the nomen that in order to present a more or less uniform doctrine, it became necessary to discuss some of Siger's accidental modes along with Thomas's essential modes <sup>(3)</sup>. This has not been necessary in the verbum, and we shall see that in many respects the Modistae present a much more unified body of doctrine for the verbum than they did for the accidental modes of the nomen. There are, however, minor divergencies between them, but these are more a matter of terminology rather than one of organisation or shift of emphasis.

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #126: non sit idem dicere, verbum activum, et activi generis; passivum, et passivi generis.

(2) cf. p. 360.

(3) cf. 5.1111.



There are potentially many more accidents <sup>(1)</sup> to a pars orationis than are described in any Modistic grammar, just as the Modistae tended to add one or more additional accidental features, having either taken over or omitted some of the accidental features found already in the grammars of their classical predecessors, i.e. Siger in the nomen followed Donatus closely except that Siger added 'species' to the list of accidents, but Siger differed from Priscian who did not include either 'qualitas' or 'gradus' among his accidents of the nomen; on the other hand, Thomas followed Priscian closely, though Thomas too went one stage ahead of Priscian and added 'persona' to the accidents of the nomen.

As for the verbum, Siger tells us that Donatus ascribed seven accidents to the verbum, i.e. modus, coniugatio, genus, numerus, figura, tempus and persona, while Priscian ascribed eight, i.e. all those of Donatus with 'species' in addition. Thrax, in his definition of the verb, had ~~added~~ <sup>listed</sup> eight categories which were applicable to the verb, i.e. mood, voice, type, form, number, tense, person and conjugation, which can be stated in Modistic terms as modus, genus, species, figura, numerus, tempus, persona, coniugatio, and so we see that Priscian followed

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(1) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.105, which is the definition of 'accident' in this instance: it should not be equated with modus accidentalis or with 'accidentia', a metaphysical term associated with 'substantia', cf.3.11.



Thrax closely as far as the accidents of the verbum are concerned. The Modistae followed Priscian closely, i.e. Siger has the same features as Priscian for his accidental modes of the verbum, but Thomas introduces the category of 'qualitas', which the others mentioned do not use, and he divides this into the sub-modes of 'modus', and 'forma' which he equates to 'species' in the nomen and which is in fact the same as Siger's category of 'species' in the verbum. Furthermore, he uses an additional accidental mode, and it would seem that this accidental mode of 'compositio' is, to him, the most important - he himself classifies it as a *modus significandi accidentalis communissimus verbi*, and he states quite categorically that the ancient <sup>(1)</sup> grammarians made no use of this category, although this is a feature present in all verbs, and for this he refers to Aristotle to support his argument <sup>(2)</sup>. Michel too seems to have included, according to Thurot, an accidental mode of the verbum which he called the *modus specificabilis* and which would appear to be like Thomas's accidental mode of 'compositio', but unfortunately Thurot gives us no further

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(1) 'Antiqui' does not necessarily mean the ancient Greeks and Romans: it was also sometimes used in the Middle Ages to refer to their immediate predecessors, and in this instance could refer to Peter Helias just as well as to Priscian and Donatus, since Peter did not describe 'compositio' as a separate feature of the verb.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #128: *hoc verbum 'est' significat quamdam compositionem, quam sine extremis non est intelligere; et tamen hoc verbum 'est' in omni verbo includitur, tamquam radix omnium: ideo compositio omni verbo inhaeret, per quam verbum distans a supposito ad suppositum..inclinatur.*



information about it. *Compositio* seems to be a most important feature of the *verbum*; quite apart from its intrinsic importance as the first of the accidental modes of the *verbum*, it plays an important role in syntax <sup>(1)</sup> by providing the link between the *suppositum* and the *appositum*; it will, however, be discussed at greater length as an independent accidental mode of signifying <sup>(2)</sup>.

After dealing with *compositio*, Thomas proceeds to analyse the other accidental modes in more or less the same way that the others do, attributing the same importance to them all; whereas, however, Donatus, Priscian and Siger equate '*genus*' to '*significatio*' and do not create a separate accident of the *verbum* for '*significatio*'. Thomas follows Peter Helias (who had described '*significatio*' as '*significatio accidentalis*') and makes of '*significatio*' another separate accidental mode, though so far as this exposition of Modistic theory is concerned, '*significatio*' has been treated as a preamble to an examination of the feature of '*genus/significatio*', an accidental mode of the *verbum* common to all the *Modistae*.

The *Modistae* present the accidental modes in slightly differing order, e.g. Thomas begins with *compositio* and then discusses *qualitas* (which he sub-divides into *modus* and *forma*),

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(1) cf. p.346.

(2) cf. 5.1<sup>22</sup>2, p.345-49.



coniugatio, significatio, genus, persona, numerus, figura and tempus. Siger follows a different order of presentation (1); he begins with genus which he, like Donatus and Priscian, equates to significatio and which Thomas treats separately, though he retains the idea of association between them. Siger then describes tempus, modus, species, figura, numerus, coniugatio, and persona in that order. It must be pointed out, that there is here a major divergence between Siger and Thomas as far as the subject matter of some of these accidental modes is concerned, e.g. compositio, significatio, since, as is shown on the diagram on p. 344, Siger does not make use of either compositio or significatio, nor does he describe these features by any other means.

To facilitate the presentation of this material and to show the similarities and differences in doctrine, some changes have been necessary in the order or presentation, which should be understood as though divided into three main groups; (i) compositio followed by modus, since, as Thomas tells us (2), modus is the quality of the compositio,

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- (1) Siger has no accidental mode of 'compositio', and his 'genus' and 'significatio' are equivalent terms but are not expressly designed to state the relationship between the verb and the post-posed oblique nominal form. Thomas's compositio and significatio coupled with modus and genus, are perhaps his most significant contributions to the theory of the verb, and have their ramifications well beyond the verb: they serve to throw a great deal of light on his syntactic theories and especially his system of transitive and intransitive constructions, cf. 3.13 and 5.24 et seq.
- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, 4131: modus, ut est accidens verbi, est qualitas compositionis.



and then significatio followed by genus since this is the quality of the significatio <sup>(1)</sup>; the correlation of compositio and significatio deals with the verb in its transitive and intransitive functions, compositio dealing with the verb in its relations with the suppositum, and the significatio with the verb and its relations with the post-posed oblique nominal form: (ii) species or forma and figura which are absolute modes as in the nomen and although they may represent features which may be described as 'synchronic derivation', their primary criteria are, as always, semantic <sup>(2)</sup>; (iii) tempus, numerus, persona, which are respective accidental modes, and which, along with mood (modus), combine to be present in any coniugatio of the verbum <sup>(3)</sup>, though they do not, strictly speaking, belong to the verb, but are acquired either from the suppositum <sup>(4)</sup> or from the sentence as a whole <sup>(5)</sup>.

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #137: genus non est formaliter significatio, sed qualitas significationis ipsam contrahens et disponens.

(2) The primary or principal criteria in the description of all categories are, in the Modistic grammatical scheme, always semantic; secondary is used to refer to other criteria, e.g. syntactic, to support the primary criteria. What it really amounts to is that Modistic procedure was to take the formal categories of Priscian and restate them in semantic terms; when this failed or could not very well be applied, as in the indeclinable partes, the Modistae resorted to more formal criteria for their statements.

(3) cf. p. 385-6.

(4) cf. p. 379.

(5) cf. p. 377.



The following diagram shows the various accidental modes of the verbum described by the grammarians of antiquity and the Middle Ages, Martin has seven accidental modes, Michel, Siger and Thomas each have eight. Asterisks have been used to indicate, in the case of Michel that his *modus specificabilis* has been included under the rubric of '*compositio*', and in the case of Thomas, that '*modus*' and '*species*' which he actually calls '*forma*', are in fact sub-modes of '*qualitas*'. It should also be noted that Michel does not appear to have included '*species*' as an accidental mode, and that Roos does not list '*coniugatio*' among Martin's accidental modes of verbum:

	Thrax	Donatus	Priscian	Martin	Michel	Siger	Thomas
<i>compositio</i>				*			*
<i>modus</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*	(*)
<i>significatio</i>							*
<i>genus</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>species/ forma</i>	*		*	*		*	(*)
<i>figura</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>tempus</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>numerus</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>persona</i>	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<i>coniugatio</i>	*	*	*			*	*
<i>qualitas</i>							(*)



(a) Compositio.

Thomas introduces two accidental modes into his description of the verb, i.e. compositio and significatio which are not to be found in either Siger or Michel de Marbais (though Siger does use the term significatio in the same way as Priscian, i.e. as an equivalent term for voice (genus)); Thomas maintains in fact that his predecessors did not make use of 'compositio' at all, which seems to be true as far as compositio can be considered an accident of the verb (and accident, as has already been pointed out <sup>(1)</sup> is not the exact equivalent of an accidental mode), but Priscian does refer to compositio as a feature of the syntax of the noun and verb <sup>(2)</sup>.

Thomas took the unusual step of declaring this accidental feature of compositio to be a modus communissimus, and there is considerable justification for placing it at the head of all the accidental modes. Aristotle had argued <sup>(3)</sup> that a verb does not itself indicate anything but implies a copulation, and Thomas argues from this that the copula element is to be found in every verb; as a result compositio is inherent in every verb, and serves to link the verb to its suppositum. This is a very important

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(1) cf. pl. 70-1: 198, fn. 6.

(2) Priscian (xi, 12): nominativus quidem sine coniunctione proferatur cum alio verbo, ut "legens doceo" pro "lego et doceo", quae compositio intransitiva est.

(3) Aristotle, De Interpretatione, Chap. III.



concept, since the essential mode of the verb declares discreteness of the verb from the suppositum - Michel de Marbais had indeed argued<sup>(1)</sup> against discreteness being considered an essential mode of the verb since it would produce precisely that situation which compositio had to remedy - to be one of its most important characteristics. For this reason, Thomas cannot make of compositio an essential mode since it is in diametric contrast to the essential mode of separation, and it is equally not a feature of the modus esse of the verb nor does it constitute a specific type of verb<sup>(2)</sup>; it is therefore an accidental mode of the verb, which states the fundamental syntactic relationship, i.e. of S and P, between the nomem-suppositum and the verbum-appositum.

It is true that other accidental modes, i.e. number and person, play a part in the relationship between the suppositum and the verb, but such a relationship cannot be compared to the relationship between the suppositum and the verb exemplified by compositio. Compositio is inherent in the verb, whereas number and person are in fact derived from the suppositum and not in and of themselves as features of the verb, and they occur only as a result (and this can be

(1) cf. p. 324.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #128: non est modus essentialis generalissimus, cum verbo non det esse simpliciter, sed sit praeter eius intellectum essentialem. Nec etiam est essentialis specialis, cum non constituat aliquam speciem verbi.



said of all the other accidental modes with the exception of significatio) of the relation between the suppositum and verb which has previously i.e. logically been established by the accidental mode of compositio.

We find then governmental concord between the compositio, which is the property of linking the verb to the suppositum (1), and the substantival element in the suppositum (2), and once this relationship has been stated, the other accidental modes will follow. This is (at least to the writer) one of Thomas's most significant contributions to the theory of the verb, i.e. that the accidental modes can be established only when the fundamental relationship of nomen-verbum has been made, - in other words the formal relationship of noun and verb must dominate all other morphologic features which are, in many senses, useless until this primary formal factor has been established; this is, as we shall see (3), true also of significatio, though this is restricted somewhat by the fact that this accidental mode will feature in certain types of construction only. The result is something which can be very satisfying aesthetically;

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #128: cum verbum sit alterum extremum in oratione, distans a supposito, et inclinetur ad suppositum, huius inclinationis principale et communissimum principium, inter ceteros modos accidentales verbi, est compositio.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #128: huic modo verbi, qui est compositio, proportionatur ex parte suppositi modus per se stantis.

(3) cf. p. 358



we begin with a fundamental relationship of noun and verb, and from this stems the operation of the other accidental modes in a beautifully staggered scheme - (we can except species and figura, since they, as absolute modes <sup>(1)</sup>, play no part whatsoever in the syntactic relationships of a construction). Thus we find, in Thomas's scheme, compositio leading to mood which expresses the quality of the compositio and these dominate the whole atmosphere of the sentence; significatio and genus express further relationships of the more complex construction, for genus is primarily a relational feature and concerned with the relationship between the verb and the post-posed nominal oblique (obliquum). When once these fundamental relationships, implicit in compositio-mood and significatio-voice, exemplified in SV, SVO and (S)V0 <sup>(2)</sup> have been established, it is then possible to move on to the purely inflectional features of tense, person, number and conjugation which can become grammatical (as opposed to paradigmatic) only as a result of the interpenetration of compositio and these inflectional accidental modes.

Compositio is therefore the accidental mode of the verb by means of which the verb consignifies the property of connection in terms of esse, and by means of which the verb,

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(1) cf. p. 247.

(2) S = suppositum, O = obliquum.



discrete from the suppositum (as a result of its essential mode) is linked to the suppositum (1).

(b) Modus.

Siger and Thomas show a very large measure of agreement in their theory of mood as an accidental mode of the verb, and their definition of the feature is almost identical, but their analytical procedures, as we shall also see in the section on voice (genus), differ quite appreciably, since Thomas is much more interested in the feature as such and devotes little space to the various moods, whereas Siger has little to say about the phenomenon of mood, but dwells at great length on the moods of the Latin verb, and furthermore considers under the rubric of mood, the gerund and the supine, since they have the value of an infinitive mood (2).

Thomas introduces the accidental mode of qualitas which he divides into mood and form or species; more will be said of this when species is considered (3), but it must be stated at this point, that Thomas is here following Donatus by his use of qualitas and its subdivisions of modus and forma; we had cause, while considering the nomen (4) to take

(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #128: compositio est modus significandi accidentalis verbi, mediante quo verbum consignificat proprietatem inhaerentis secundum esse, et quo mediante verbum distans a supposito, primo et principaliter ad suppositum inclinatur.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.115: gerundia, participialia seu supposita vim infinitivorum habent et funguntur voce eorum.

(3) cf. p. 372.

(4) cf. 5.1111.



into account Siger's accidental mode of *qualitas* subdivided into *appellativa* and *propria*, which Thomas, however, included as subaltern modes of the essential mode, but on this occasion Thomas makes of *qualitas* an accidental mode of the *verbum*, and its sub-categories of *modus* and *forma* will be considered as accidental modes along with Siger's accidental modes of *modus* and *species*. The association of mood with *qualitas* seems, in Thomas's scheme, to have important implications, since mood is, by definition, the quality of the *compositio* which creates the link between the *suppositum* and the verb <sup>(1)</sup> and thereby repairs the 'damage' created by the discreteness (*distantia*) required as an essential feature of the verb.

Mood is derived from the property of the verb, i.e. the property of the qualification, arrangement and relationship of the verb to the subject element of the verb <sup>(2)</sup>, which signifies the quality of indication, command, wish, doubt or non-specification. Mood is therefore the accidental mode of the verb which designates the property of various states of the mind and consignifies, by means of the various qualities, i.e. indication, command, etc. which are derived from these states of mind expressed by mood, the dependence

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #131: *modus, ut est accidens verbi, est qualitas compositionis, qua verbum inclinatur ad suppositum.*

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #131: *modus sumitur a proprietate rei verbi, quae est proprietas qualificationis, dispositionis, et inclinationis rei verbi ad suppositionem.*



of the verb on the suppositum (1).

Peter Helias had defined mood as the different inclinations of the mind revealed in the different effects it achieves, but Thomas however is very insistent, and this is most important for an understanding of Thomas's whole procedure, that mood is not this inclination of the mind but its quality (2), and therefore mood becomes the quality of the compositio which provides the link between the verb and the suppositum. This is, in Thomas's eyes, clearly a fundamental relationship, which, as we shall see (3), will be paralleled by a similar fundamental relationship between the verb and the post-posed oblique form exemplified by significatio, the quality of which will be expressed by means of the voice (genus); these fundamental relationships can be stated by means of the following diagram, and it will be seen that they state the governing associations in any construction, either transitive or intransitive, which contains a verb (4), the other factors which are to be found in any such construction, i.e. the accidental modes of tense, number, person and conjugation, can be introduced

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶131*: modus verbi nihil aliud est quam modus significandi accidentalis verbi, mediante quo proprietatem verbi per modum indicii, imperii, voti, dubii, vel infiniti circa verbi dependentiam ad suppositum con-significat.

Siger de Courtrai, p.112: modus in verbo est modus significandi accidentalis verbi designans circa rem modum essendi variae inclinationis animi, varios eius affectus demonstrans et dicitur in indicativum, imperativum, optativum, coniunctivum, infinitivum.

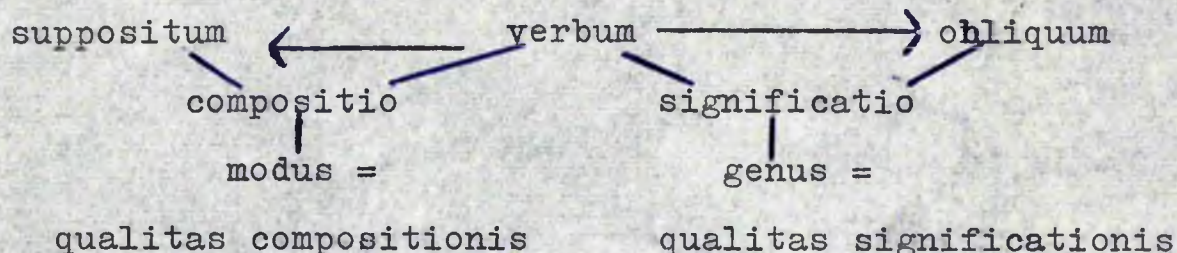
(2) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶131*: sed non quod modus sit ipsa inclination sed qualitas inclinationis, non ea, qua anima inclinatur ad enuntiandum actus de substantia.

(3) cf. p.358-9.

(4) cf. 5.241.



when once these primary relationships have been set up;  
we have thus, as these primary relationships:



Compositio is therefore going to be a vital factor in any constructio intransitive actuum (1) which consists of NV or suppositum-appositum, one of the favourite sentence types of Latin in which compositio will express the relationship between the S and the dependent P: similarly significatio will play an analagous function in the constructio transi-tiva actuum (2) which also represents a favourite sentence of Latin, i.e. VN or verb and post-posed nominal oblique, in which significatio will express the relationship between the dependent V and the post-posed N. It will also be seen that the relationship between the suppositum and the verb is basically one of modus entis and modus esse; the modus esse assures that the verb will remain discrete from the suppositum and thereby function as the constructible separate from the nominal constructible in the construction (3) -

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(1) cf. 5.2411.

(2) cf. 5.2421.

(3) cf. 5.24 for the use of terms such as constructible.



which will also occur in any construction consisting of verb and oblique nominal; the compositio serves therefore to assert the fundamental relationship between the verb and suppositum but also refines it so that mood which is the quality of the compositio, can associate with the substantial (modus per se stantis) element in the pre-posed suppositum (1). The basic relationship between the verb and the suppositum in any SP construction consists of the thing and what is said about it, and the attitude of mind which is involved in expressing this. This can be linked to the moderate realism of the Modistae, which, as has already been pointed out, was the philosophical creed they shared with most of the Schoolmen of the 13th and 14th centuries, and which argues that words are not vocal noises but correlates of reality, though subjected to the moderating influence of the mind which perceives understands and seeks to express this reality. This metaphysical theory acts as a substrate to their grammatical theories and from time to time appears to exert a more direct influence on a particular aspect of their theory; the relationships of NV expressed by composite<sup>io</sup> and mood are one example of such 'interference'. Compositio functions by creating the link between the N and the V so that we can know the thing and what is said about

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #133: sicut verbum per modum esse exigit in supposito modum entis per se stantis; sic per modum, qui est qualitas compositionis, exigit in supposito modum per se stantis, in ratione principii se habentis.



it, while mood is used to express the attitude of mind which 'governs' the creation and purpose of the relationship.

Mood is therefore the expression of certain attitudes of mind and is diversified, in terms of the different qualities of the relationships thus made between the verb and suppositum, into indicative, imperative, optative, conjunctive and infinitive.

The indicative is that mood of the verb which designates the property of indication (1), and possesses the full complement of person and tense; the imperative mood expresses the property of command (2) but lacks the first person of the singular and the preterite tense; the optative is the mood designating the property of choice (3) and possesses the full complement of person and tense; the conjunctive or subjective is the mood expressing doubt, confirmation or possibility (4) and has the same tenses and persons as the indicative. (It should be noted that all these definitions given by Siger are done for and by means of Latin). It would be needless to dwell at any further length

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.112: *indicativus est modus verbi designans circa rem verbi modum essendi indicantis.*

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.113: *imperativus est modus designans circa rem verbo modum essendi imperantis.*

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.113: *optativus est modus designans circa rem modum modum essendi optantis.*

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p.114: *coniunctivus, subiunctivus, seu dubitativus... aliquando significat dubitationem, aliquando confirmationem seu comprobationem, aliquando possibilitatem.*



on these moods, since they are, at least in Siger's descriptions, merely expansions of any descriptions of the moods of a Latin verb, and add really nothing more to the earlier definition of mood as the designation and signification of certain states of mind (1).

The infinitive was included in the mood, at least by Thomas, by virtue of the fact that all moods can be resolved into the infinitive (2), which is therefore a common factor in all moods of the verb, so that "lego" can be resolved into "indico me legere" and "lege" into "impero te legere". The infinitive for Siger, becomes the mood

- (1) The Modistae, by basing their criteria for mood on purely semantic terms, were able to insist on the distinction between the subjunctive and the optative; it is not possible to make such a distinction in any formal system of Latin grammar. Priscian, whose own quasi formal categories are based on those of Thrax, had presumably noted the distinction in Greek which he was not able to make for Latin a similar distinction. cf. Priscian (XVIII, 125-6): Latini quoque omnibus temporibus subiunctivi modi etiam in optativo utuntur, ostendit tam usus quam antiquiores Donato artium scriptores, Virgilius in VI:

Hac Troiana tenus fuerit Fortuna secuta.  
ecce hic (fuerit) optative posuit in precatatione Aeneae hoc verbum, quod tam praeteriti perfecti quam futuri potest esse: quod Donatus et quidam alii subiunctivi tantummodo putant esse, cum aliae omnes voces optativi communes sint etiam subiunctivo. Ergo non immerito in supra dicta Attica constructione, qua illi optativis utuntur, hoc quoque tempore indifferenter nostri sunt usi.

The Modistae, who deliberately set out to establish a new grammatical theory by semanticising Priscian's more formal divisions, were thus able to produce criteria for distinctions between the optative and subjunctive. This is however a hollow achievement, since a distinction such as this, which is not supported by formal criteria, will not be a productive feature in a system of grammatical description and detracts from the general economy of their procedure.

- (2) Thomas of Erfurt, #132: dicitur infinitivus, quia omnibus communis est, cum omnes modi in ipsum resolvantur.



which designates the property of non-specification without reference to the properties of the other moods, rather like neuter gender in the nomen which expresses its property without reference to the masculine or the feminine (1). The infinitive lacks voice, number and person, but despite such imperfections it can combine with verbs of other moods, expressing a particular state of mind, to produce complete constructions, rather like imperfect matter which will combine with other matter to produce a complete entity (2).

It has already been stated that Siger includes the gerund<sup>as</sup> a mood of the verb - (Thomas excludes the gerund entirely from his grammar) - because it has the value of an infinitive; it does not seem that Siger was able to extract, from his consideration of the gerund, anything which contributes to the discussion of mood.

Mood is therefore the expression of a state of mind involved in the operation of compositio, and herein lies the importance of mood as an accidental mode of the verb; compositio is the means by which the verb is able to offset the feature of discreteness (distantia) which is a feature

- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.114: infinitivus est modus designans circa rem verbi modum essendi infiniti seu indefiniti et indifferenter se habentem ad modum essendi aliorum modorum, sicut neutrum in nomine designat circa rem modum essendi indifferenter se habentem ad modum essendi masculini et feminini.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.115: sicut materia imperfecta exigens debitam unionem quae dat ei esse perfectum, sic infinitivus affectum animi imperfectum importans congruam constructionem habet cum verbis aliorum modorum certum affectum animi importantium.



of its essence, and linked up to the suppositum, and mood expresses the state of mind necessarily entailed in such a relationship. We have seen that compositio requires mood as a concomitant since compositio cannot suggest the state of mind involved; the NV relationship is an expression of assertion and mood therefore signifies the state of mind involved in such an expression. Indeed it can be stated more positively, that the verb, by virtue of its essential mode, can stand discrete from the nominal suppositum, and by virtue of its accidental mode of compositio these two entities can be linked together to form a construction; and the mood which is the material expression of this compositio, enhances the nature of the relationship between the suppositum and the verb, not by altering the relationship but by stating its quality in terms of the different attitudes of mind it can express.

c) Significatio.

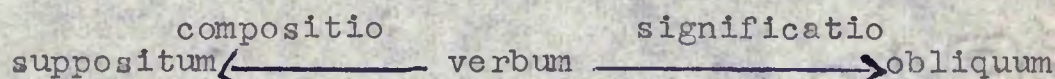
This is a category which is found only <sup>in</sup> Thomas; Donatus, Priscian and Siger (1) use the term but include it in their analysis of the voice (genus) of the verb, whereas Thomas keeps it separate and makes of it a very significant section by using it to balance compositio, which, as we have seen, Thomas had used to discuss the relationship between the verb and its suppositum, and stands in a very close relationship to the moods of the

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.109: genus seu significatio.



verb. Significatio balances the pattern by referring to the verb and its relationship with the post-posed oblique nominal and is thus very closely associated to the voice (genus) of the verb. It is the expansibility of the verb and in instances such as the verbum neutrum, the significatio will be zero since there can not be a post-posed oblique, i.e. the dependent verb will have as its terminal (1) a zero oblique. It is an accidental mode for the same reasons that compositio is an accidental mode i.e. it does not refer to the modus esse of the verb, nor is it a special mode, since it cannot in itself constitute a different species of verb (2). The relationship can be represented diagrammatically this:



This accidental mode must be seen in conjunction with the other accidental mode of compositio; they both govern the relationship between the verb and the post-posed oblique nominal or the pre-posed nominal suppositum. Significatio is derived from that property of the verb *which is its property of being dependent on some post-* posed oblique (3), and we shall see (4) that this is in effect equivalent to Thomas's definition of the transitive

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- 1) cf. 313 for the explanation of this term.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #128: non est modus essentialis generalissimus, cum verbo non det esse simpliciter, sed sit praeter eius intellectum essentialem. Nec etiam est essentialis specialis cum non constituat aliquam speciem verbi.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #136: significatio sumitur a proprietate rei verbi, quae est proprietas dependentiae ad quemlibet obliquum post se, habentem se in ratione per se standi.
  - 4) cf. 5.242.



construction (1); Thomas points out that Peter Helias too had, by using the term 'significatio accidentalis', intended *modus transeuntis* (2).

*Significatio* (and *compositio*) represent an interesting innovation on the part of Thomas; the other accidental modes are expressions, regardless of the fact that they are described in purely semantic terms, of morphologic features which will be either inflectional or derivational. *Significatio* and *compositio* have recourse to syntactic criteria, which are governmental concord between the substantival element represented by the *modus per se stantis* in the oblique form (and the mode of dependence in the verb (or the substantival element in the *suppositum*); we have already seen that *compositio* is achieved by means of a similar concord between the substantival element and the mode of dependence.

d) Genus.

Consideration of this accidental mode affords an excellent study in contrast between the methods of Siger and Thomas. Siger gives no definition whatsoever of *genus*, which is clearly for him a synonym of *significatio*, and divides it into the five categories of active, passive, neuter, deponent and common, which he proceeds to describe

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1) cf. 5.2311.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #136: per significationem accidentalem vult intelligere modum transeuntis, id est, modum dependentis ad quemlibet obliquum post se.



at some length with particular reference to the Latin verb. On the other hand, Thomas discusses at length this feature of voice, but dismisses very summarily the five sub-divisions just mentioned. This means that the exposition of the Modistic analysis of voice (genus) will depend largely on Thomas for the theory of the feature and largely on Siger for illustration and discussion of the different sub-modes.

Voice (genus) is derived from that property of the verb, the property of dependence on the post-posed oblique nominal form which will be the final element in the construction (1) but which, as far as the voice of the verb is concerned, needs only to be potential (2); in other words, a transitive verb may have an object but does not necessarily have to have one. Voice is, therefore, that accidental mode of the verb by means of which it signifies its dependence on the post-posed oblique nominal form (3). This is quite in keeping with Peter Felias's definition of voice as '*significatio accidentalis*' with the ending of /-o/ or /-r/, which is, therefore, the *modus transeuntis* with the ending /-o/ or /-r/ and which serves to differentiate the different species of voice. Peter's definition of genus is in effect a combination of *significatio* and genus,

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1) cf. 5.243

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #137: *genus in verbo sumitur a proprietate rei verbi, quae est proprietas dependentiae rei verbi, post se ad obliquum, sub ratione termini non contracti sed contrahibile.*

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #137: *genus in verbo est modus significandi accidentalis verbi, mediante quo proprietatem dependentiae rei verbi post se ad obliquum, sub ratione termini, significat.*



i.e. a combination of the relational and its different expressions, and Siger is more or less in accord with this. Thomas differs sharply from Peter in that significatio for Thomas is the relation between the verb and the post-posed substantival element contained in the obliquum by means of the modus per se stentis, and genus becomes the quality of this relationship (1), just as mood became the quality of the compositio. This is an important step forward on Thomas's part, and the distinction between significatio and genus must be clearly understood. In Thomas's terminology, this definition is a material not a formal one - (2) and this applies also to mood with regard to compositio; if it were formal this would imply a different relationship with the post-posed oblique according to the different voice, but since it is material, this means that the relationship will be the same in every instance but its quality will vary, and it will thus be the function of voice, i.e. to express this different quality, so that we can have active voice and oblique, or passive voice and oblique in which the relationship is always one of the verb dependent on the oblique (even if the dependence is only potential).

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #137: sicut se habet modus verbi ad compositionem, sic se habet genus ad significationem...genus non est formaliter significatio, sed qualitas significationis ipsam contrahens et disponens.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #137: haec definitio generis non est formalis, sed materialis. Genus non est formaliter significatio, quia unus modus non est alius, sed genus est quasi qualitas significationis determinans sive specificans significationem.



This also suggests that if the different voices do not result from different relationships, then they will derive from internal factors - Thomas interprets it by means of the false etymology that the expression of one voice is bred from the expression of another voice, as the passive is created from the active (1). The Modistae did not often resort to etymology to explain a feature; it is as well that they used this method as infrequently as they did, since etymology was clearly one of their weakest points. Mention has already been made of Thomas's curious use of etymology to explain the origin of 'persona' as an accidental mode of the *momen*. As far as 'genus' is concerned, genus as an accidental mode of the verb functions in association with *significatio* in the same way that mood did with *compositio*: it would seem, therefore, that genus is the expression of a state of mind created by the relationship involved between the verb and the post-posed nominal oblique, while *significatio* is responsible for the actual relationship.

An understanding of this association between genus and *significatio* is most essential for an understanding of the difference between the different voices of the verb and the different *modi specialissimi* of the verb (2); the *modi specialissimi* represent different types of verb and in this context "amo" is considered different from "amor"

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, #137: *vocatur iste modus significandi genus, a generando dictum, quia vox unius generis generatur a voce alterius generis, ut vox passiva generata a voce activa.*

2) cf. 5.1211.



because "amo" signifies an action and "amor" a being acted on, and a *verbum adiectivum commune* (1) is defined as signifying either an action or being acted on. It should be noted that such a definition is made purely and simply in intrinsic terms of the essence of the verb. Voice, on the other hand, is established as a result of the quality of the relationship between the verb and the post-posed oblique; in the two constructions "doceo litteras" and "doceor litteras", the relationship between the verb and the noun oblique is the same but the quality of the relationship is different in either case, and it is this which decides the voice which is expressed by means of the ending /-o/ or /-r/. Thus we see that in terms of the *modus specialissimus* 'doceo' and 'doceor' are different types of verbs since 'doceo' expresses an action and 'doceor' expresses being acted on, but in terms of voice, they are different because they express a different quality of relationship, and the difference between action and passion becomes in this instance a secondary matter, a matter of consignification. Apart from anything else, this serves to illuminate something which has been mentioned before on several occasions, i.e. the dangers and problems of non-formal linguistic analysis. Thomas tells us (2) that, e.g. 'timeo', although it possesses in its form the

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1) cf. p. 334 .

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #139: ista verba, timeo, liceo, metuo, quae sub voce activa modum passionis significant.



the active voice, in reality signifies not an action but being acted on; it would be interesting to know whether Thomas would have classified this, when dealing with the *modi specialissimi* of the verb, as a *verbum adiectivum passivum*, which, it will be remembered, he defined as signifying a passion only (1).

We can say then that the difference in voice (genus) is to a large extent a matter of the expression, which is supported by reference to Donatus who said that the active voice of a verb is that which ends in /-o/ and can acquire /-r/ added to the /-o/ and thus become the passive voice (2). Quite clearly, such a formal definition could not possibly be sufficient for the *Modistae*, since for them the ending of /-o/ or /-r/ alone cannot establish whether a verb will <sup>be</sup> of active or passive voice (3); *significatio* sets up the relationship of VN so that we know the result of the action or passion of the verb, and genus therefore signifies the dependence of the verb on the post-posed oblique form of a transitive construction (4); but genus tells us more of this relationship and does this by means of different formal criteria, though of course the *Modistae* never deliberately used such criteria, e.g. the morphological

1) cf. 5.1211.

2) Donatus: activa quae sunt? Quae in 'o' desinunt et accepta 'r' littera faciunt ex se passiva, ut lego legor.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #138: verbum per vocis terminationem non magis determinat sibi actionem quam passionem, ideo dubium est quare verbum sub terminatione vocis in 'o' magis debet esse activi generis, quam passivi, et sic de caeteris.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #138: genus verbi sit ratio significandi dependentiam rei verbi post se ad obliquum sub ratione termini. cf. also 3.13 and 5.24 where transitive and intransitive constructions are discussed.



criterion of the conjugation, i.e. /-o/ or /-or/, the syntactic criterion of the post-posed case, i.e. "lego librum" in contrast to "legitur a Socrate", or the syntactic criterion of the zero post-posed oblique which indicates a neuter voice (*genus neutrum*) etc. This will be done in Modistic terms by means of a combination of the expression (*vox*) and the semantic element of action, passion, etc., to signify, however, a similar fundamental relationship of verb and a potential post-posed oblique. It is interesting to note that Thomas does nevertheless give expression pride of place over content in establishing the voice of the verb (1).

Siger describes the active voice as the accidental mode of signifying of the verb which can end in /-o/ and can acquire /-r/ and thus make it the passive (2), which is entirely in keeping with Donatus's definition; similarly Siger defines the passive voice as ending in /-r/, and if this is lost, then it becomes the active voice (3). He defines the other voices, i.e. neuter, deponent and common in somewhat similar semi-formal terms. Thomas describes the various sub-modes of genus in similar semi-formal terms but adds, as part of the definition, that, e.g. the

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, ¶138: oportet praeter hoc ad vocis terminationem attendere, si velimus genera verborum servare.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.109: activum est modus significandi accidentaliter verbi signatus per vocem quae desinit in 'o' et potest recipere 'r' et facere ex se passivum, designans circa rem modum essendi agentis.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.109-10: passivum genus est genus verbi signatum per vocem quae desinit in 'r', et, ea dempta, redit in activum, designans circa rem modum essendi patientis.



active voice usually (*frequentius*) signifies an action, though there are verbs which have an active voice and yet have a passive signification, and similarly for the other sub-modes. Siger stays closer to the more formal definition than does Thomas, and despite the fact that Siger also states that the active voice is used to designate the property of acting, and that it may also signify by means of the *modus transeuntis* (which, it is true, is common to the active, passive, and indeed in some cases to the deponent and neuter voices) (1), he seems to be able to account more easily for the apparent exceptions than Thomas seemingly can with his very bald statement, that the active voice usually signifies an action but can also signify being acted on (2); Siger, for example, explains (3) the fact that 'timeo' has an active voice but implies a being acted on by stating <sup>that</sup> ~~that~~ 'timeo' really means 'timorem patior' (4).

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.100: et quia significant per modum transeuntis qui est communis activis, passivis, etc, et quibusdam deponentibus et neutris, ideo dicuntur transitiva. Thus suggests that Siger is using 'transitive' here in the traditional sense rather than in the Modistic sense as Thomas uses it, cf. 3.13.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, // 139: illud verbum est activum, seu activi generis, quod sub terminatione vocis in 'o', potest mutari in 'r', et frequentius actionem significat, ut amo. Et dicitur frequentius, propter ista verba, timeo, liceo, metuo, quae sub voce activa modum passionis significant.
  - 3) A mistake, common to the Modistae and the modern normative grammarian, is their failure to recognise that any definition or 'rule' which produces so many exceptions, no matter how plausible the explanations may be, is quite clearly based on faulty criteria.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p.100: voce actionem significant: nihil enim aliud est "timeo" quam "timorem patior" et "timeor" quam "timorem facio".



The passive voice is indicated by the ending in /-r/ and can, by the loss of /-r/, become an active voice (1); the neuter voice ends in /-o/ as in the active voice but may not acquire the /-r/ of the passive (2), the deponent and the common voices end in /-r/ but may not lose the /-r/ and thus become an active voice (3). Little would be achieved by describing in detail Siger's analysis of the different voices, which is in effect a description of the Latin verb and thereby would add little to any discussion of the theory of voice as a feature of the verb. Siger's theory of 'principium constructionis', which, as has already been said (4), he uses to indicate a constructible member, reveals interesting extensions of the possible relationships between the verb and the post-posed oblique forms in Latin; we find that the active voice can create a relationship by means of the accusative case in the oblique, e.g. oro te, but also with the genitive, or dative, or ablative, e.g. intelligo a te; the passive voice uses the ablative, e.g.

- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #140: verbum passivi generis est, quod sub terminatione vocis in 'r', potest mutari in 'o', et frequentius passionem significat, ut amor. Et dico frequentius, propter liceor, quae sub voce passiva actionem significant.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #141: verbum neutri generis est, quod sub terminatione vocis in 'o', non potest mutari in 'r', et sub indifferentia, vel indeterminatione actionem vel passionem significat, ut curro.
- 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #142-3: verbum deponentis generis est, quod sub terminatione vocis in 'r' non potest mutari in 'o', et consignificat actionem, deposita passione, ut loquor...  
....Verbum communis generis est, quod sub terminatione vocis in 'r' non potest mutari in 'o', et consignificat actionem et passionem simul, ut criminor.
- 4) cf. p.224-5.



doceor a te, the dative or the accusative, and similarly for the other voices. But as was just said, these relationships are expressed in terms of the syntax of Latin and they too add little to the theory of relationship and voice, and there is, as a consequence, no need to dwell on them at any length.

The relationship of suppositum and verb is one of modus entis and modus esse, and compositio becomes the means of stating more accurately the relationship between them to be the substantival, i.e. modus per se stantis, in the suppositum and the verb, and by stating the quality of the compositio, we state the moods of the construction, whereupon the dependent modes of tense, person, number, and conjugation can be established. Similarly, the relationship of verb and oblique is one of modus esse and modus entis, and by means of the significatio we can state the relationship more accurately as verb and the substantival element (1), and then by means of the quality of the significatio, i.e. by means of the voice, the whole balance of the relationship between the verb and the post-posed oblique form will be influenced by the quality of the significatio, i.e. by the voice.

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, /144: sicut verbum per modum esse requirit modum entis in supposito, sic per eundem modum esse exigit modum entis in obliquo. Et sicut verbum per compositionem exigit per se stantis in supposito, sic per significationem accidentalem exigit modum per stantis in obliquo...sicut verbum per modum distantis exigit modum per stantis pro supposito, ita per eundem modum esse exigit modum entis in oblique. Et sicut verbum per modum compositionis exigit modum entis per se stantis in ratione principii in supposito, sic per modum generis exigit modum entis per se stantis in ratione termini in obliquo.



e) Species/forma.

Thomas tells us in fact that *forma* in the verb is the same as *species* in the nomen (1) and is derived from the same properties as in the nomen, i.e. from the primary or secondary *modus essendi* (2); both Siger and Thomas describe this feature as divided, as it was in the nomen, into primitive and derivative. Their analysis of *species* shows considerable light on their method of description in terms of meaning; *species* is a morpho-derivational (3) category and might well be expected to consist of a primary root-word, i.e. the *primitiva*, from which some other form is derived by a morphologic or analagous formal procedure. The *species primitiva* does, it is true, represent the minimal form for the *Modistae*, but not in the modern formal sense; Siger tells us that Donatus used the term '*forma perfecta*' (which may well have inspired Thomas to use this term) to describe the primitive type (4) which can be taken to represent the minimal member of the verb-class, and the other *species* of verb are derived (5) from this primary form, which signifies the

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1) cf. p. 249-54.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #134: *forma*, quae est accidens verbi, idem est, quod *species* in nomine, et ab eadem proprietate sumpta, scilicet a modo essendi primarie vel secundarie. *Forma* est *modus significandi* accidentalis verbi, mediante quo verbum modum existendi primum vel secundarium significat.

3) derivation is used in the sense of synchronic derivation.

4) Siger de Courtrae, p.117: est *primitiva* quae primam positionem ab ipsa natura accepit, ut: *lego*, quam Donatus appellat *formam verborum perfectam*.

5) There is a slight divergence in terminology between Siger and Thomas; in the nomen Siger talks about *species primitiva* and *determinativa* while Thomas talks about the *primitiva* and *derivativa*: in the verb both Siger and Thomas talk about the *primitiva* and *derivativa*. It was seen, when discussing *species* in the nomen (cf. 5.1112, p. 25'), '*derivativa*' is distinct from '*determinativa*', but in the verb, both use '*derivativa*' identically.



thing absolutely (1), not however by virtue of any morphologic change but by virtue of the fact that they add something, i.e. some additional meaning or meaningful feature to the primary form of the verb which in the first place was devised to indicate some feature of reality (2). There are, for both Siger and Thomas, many different types of derived species, six for Siger and five for Thomas (3); Siger goes on to list in some detail the various categories of derived verb to be found in Latin (4). One example will suffice to show that the derived form is made by the addition of some further refinement of the primary meaning by means of the addition of an 'ending' which changes the meaning; Thomas has nothing more to add and makes no attempt to introduce formal criteria (5). Siger does, however, introduce formal criteria to support his semantic criteria and describes each derived 'species' in terms of the additional or derived meaning and supports this by the use of

- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #134: per formam perfectam debet intelligi species primitiva; quia quae sunt perfectae formae sunt primitivae speciei, quia significant rem verbi absolute.
- 2) Reference has already been made (Chapter II and 3.11) to the nominalist-realist controversy and its relevance to Modistic grammatical theory.
- 3) Siger de Courtrai: inchoativa, meditativa, frequentativa, desiderativa, diminutiva, imitativa.  
Thomas of Erfurt: meditativa, frequentativa, inchoativa, diminutiva, desiderativa.
- 4) This seems to be typical of Siger, who goes to some length, in most of the accidental modes, to illustrate in detail his descriptive statement of Latin grammar.
- 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #134: sed quae sunt inchoativae formae, et sic de caeteris, sunt derivativae speciei, quae non significant rem verbi absolute, sed cum quadam additione, scilicet, sub inchoatione, frequentatione, etc.



morphological changes to demonstrate the change in structure; the inchoative verb signifies the beginning of an action or passion - it ends in /-sco/ and all are to be found in the third conjugation, e.g. calleo - callesco. Siger does not, however, describe the morphological process as the addition of an infix, i.e. / calle - o / to become / calle - /sc/ - o/. What Siger is in fact saying is that the process is one of stating the formal structure in semantic terms, i.e. the basic meaning which is the species primitiva (which may have no reference to the morphemic root) to which is added the feature of inchoateness, repetitiveness, etc. It matters less that his formal criteria should be incorrect, e.g. he describes the formation of "callesco" as constructed from the second person singular of the indicative of the primitive 'species' with the addition of /-co/, i.e. calleo - les - callesco, than that he should have used formal criteria at all, especially when describing a derivational (i.e. absolute) mode. Furthermore, he is prepared to face the fact that there will be verbs with the same formal characteristics as inchoative verbs but which are not themselves inchoative verbs, e.g. quiesco, pasco (1); unfortunately he does not dwell on this, and characteristically implies, by his silence, that semantic distinctions are in such instances the vital, conclusive factor.

1) Siger de Courtrae, p.115: *inveniuntur tamen quaedam primitiva inchoativorum, formam habentia, non tamen sunt inchoativa, ut: quiesco, posco, pasco, etc.*



In the verb, Donatus had included mood (modus) and form (forma) as subdivisions of qualitas and as accidents of the verb; Thomas follows Donatus closely in this and considers them accidental modes, presumably because mood and form do not indicate different types of verbs and therefore could not be re-classified as subaltern modes of the essential mode of the verb. It is interesting to see the influence that Donatus and Priscian held over the Modistae, despite their temporary eclipse in the 13th century schools by 'inferior' grammarians such as Alexander of Villedieu; this alone can surely explain Thomas's curious retention of mood and form together, especially as they are clearly different in his scheme, in that mood must be a respective mode and form an absolute mode, and although they are both morphologic categories, mood is quite clearly inflectional and form derivational, despite the fact that Thomas did not describe either of them in such terms. In the nomen, the link between species and figura was quite clear, and they were classed together as the absolute derivational modes(1); in the verb, the link between them is similarly obvious, though it was ignored by Siger (as in fact he also did in the nomen) and implicitly denied by Thomas. It might have been more appropriate to group mood and voice together (2) in view of their definitions as subdivisions

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1) cf. pp. 246-64.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #137: sicut se habet modus verbi ad compositionem, sic se habet genus ad significationem.



or sub modes of qualitas; we have seen the close relationship between compositio and modus, and signification and voice, and we should bear in mind that Thomas stated that mood is the quality of the compositio (1) and voice is the quality of significatio (2). Thomas has, despite these strictures, grouped forma and modus together as sub-divisions of qualitas.

It will be remembered that in discussing the nomen (3), a certain amount of reorganisation of material became necessary in order to make a united statement on the nature of the nomen and that this was done because Siger included in his description of qualitas certain material which Thomas had described in his subaltern modes of his essential mode of the nomen. Thomas, in the verbum, includes qualitas as an accidental mode which he sub-divides into mood (modus) and forma; he does this in conformity with Donatus who had also subdivided qualitas in the nomen into 'appellativa' and 'propria', as indeed Siger has subdivided his accidental mode of qualitas, but which Thomas, however, made into an essential mode. Furthermore we shall see in the pronomen (4) that Thomas will include qualitas once more as an essential mode, this time subdivided into demonstratio and relatio.

This affords an excellent example of Thomas's procedure; in every case of his using qualitas, i.e. in the nomen,

- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #131: modum...est qualitas compositionis.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #137: genus...est...qualitas significationis.
- 3) cf. p. 231-236.
- 4) cf. 5.1141.



pronomen and verbum, he has followed Donatus (almost 'au pied de la lettre'), but has of course restated Donatus retaining at the same time the principal facts which Donatus had stated: thus we find that 'appellativa' and 'propria' which for Donatus are accidents of the nomen, become for Thomas different types of nomen, i.e. different aspects of the essence of the nomen and are therefore included as subaltern modes of the essential mode, which is entirely in keeping with his definition of the subaltern mode (1). Similarly in the pronomen, demonstratio and relatio which were for Donatus accidents, become for Thomas different aspects of the pronomen, which he includes therefore in the subaltern mode of the essential mode (2).

Like figura, and like species in the nomen, it is an absolute mode; it is thus not syntactic and represents a morpho-semantic statement of the semi-formal classification of the primary and derived types of verb as Priscian and Donatus had previously described them.

f) Figura.

Neither Siger nor Thomas add anything to their previous description of figura as an accidental mode of the nomen in their discussion of figura as an accidental mode of the verbum(3).

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #21: *modus significandi essentialis subalternus est, qui est de essentia suppositorum illius partis, nec generalissime, nec specialissime, sed medio modo se habens.*
  - 2) cf. 5.1141.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.119: *figura et numerus sunt modi significandi accidentales communes nomini et verbo et aliis partibus orationis, ideo dicta de eis in nomine ad praesens sufficient.*



It follows then that figura will be an accidental mode of signifying of the verb and can be divided into simple and compound, and in the case of Thomas, into the third subdivision of *decomposita* (1). As in the nomen, it will be an absolute mode, and together with species it forms the two derivational sub-classes of the verb, and as in the nomen, we might consider figura as the 'morphemic base structure' (2).

g) Tempus.

The inclusion by the Modistae of tempus as an accidental mode of the verb represents almost the final step away from the logical definition of the verb and its relation to the time factor, which had characterised the definition of the verb since Aristotle, who had said (3) that a verb carries with it the notion of time; for the Modistae, time is no longer an essential feature of the verb (though it is argued by Thomas that time is a factor in the becoming (*fieri*) or succession (*successio*) which are characteristics of the essence of the verb (4)) and has been 'relegated' to be an accidental mode of the verb, i.e. a feature which is not derived from the essence of the *pars orationis* in question (5).

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1) cf. pp. 255-6.

2) R.H. Robins, *Thrax*, p.99.

3) Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, Chap. III.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #147: *modus temporis secundum esse rationis consequitur modum esse, qui est modus fluxus et successionis*.

5) Thomas of Erfurt, #20: *modus significandi accidentalis est, qui advenit parti post eius esse completum, non dans esse simpliciter parti, nec secundum genus, nec secundum speciem*.



Peter Helias, as was pointed out (1), sought to reconcile the logical and grammatical definitions of the verb and in so doing came to consider tempus as an accidental mode of the verb, though the time element remained as a feature of his definition of the verb. The significant fact of Peter's treatment of tense is that he excluded from his definition of tense all idea of duration which, according to Thurot, had been the theory in the earlier Middle Ages; time became for him a reference not duration, and time became therefore subordinate to the act itself, i.e. the location of the act in time (2).

This new attitude to time characterises the Modistic use of tense as an accidental feature of the verb; Michel de Marbais described two kinds of time - the first represents an uninterrupted quantity and as such is the measure of movement and rest (3), but this is a matter for the natural philosopher and not for the grammarian; the feature of time, which is a matter for the grammarian, is the accidental mode of the verb which designates the action as it occurs at some point in time, present, past or future (4).

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- 1) cf. p. 310
  - 2) Peter Helias: nec illud dico quod verbum consignificat tempus quantitative, quod antiqui dicebant, sed potius quod consignificat tempus ut ad predicamentum 'quando' pertinet. Qui dicit 'cucurri' actum quidem currendi..principaliter designat, sed quando significat secundario.
  - 3) Michel de Marbais: tempus..est continua quantitas, et tale tempus est mensura motus et quietis.
  - 4) Michel de Marbais: tempus..est quidam modus significandi datus alicui voci ad designandum diversas partes temporis reales, utpote presentationem, preteritionem vel futuritionem.



Tense is derived, as we have seen, from the flux and succession of the essence of the verb by means of which the verb consignifies time (1), which is divided into present, past and future (2). Unlike the other accidental modes, except species and figura, tempus is not a respective accidental mode (3) with reference to the verb itself, since tense depends neither on the pre-posed suppositum nor on the post-posed obliquum (4), but is respective with reference to temporal adverbs, since it is obviously incongruous to utter such sentences as "Plato disputat heri"; tempus becomes a respective mode by virtue of the sequence of tenses in composite sentences, i.e. tempus is a respective mode not by virtue of any intrinsic feature of the verb, but as a result of inter-clausal relation and the concomitant collocation of the tenses. Tense thus represents, in addition to compositio and significatio, whose function is to express the fundamental relationships between NV and VN, a further relational attribute of the verb, and clearly the Modistae, especially Thomas were at pains to discuss this as fully as they did the conventional semantic (and morphological) categories of the verb.

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- 1) This is an excellent example of consignification used in the sense of connotation, i.e. the second use of 'consignificatio', cf. p. 82.
  - 2) Michel de Marbais: tempus presupponit modum significandi fluxus vel fieri.  
Thomas of Erfurt, #147: tempus est modus significandi accidentaliter verbi, quo mediante verbum, citra rem, modum temporis consignificat.
  - 3) cf. 4.243.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #149: tempus non est accidens respectivum verbi cum secundum ipsum non dependent ante se ad suppositum nec post se ad obliquum.



Thomas and Siger are largely in agreement on their description of tense (1), though Siger does provide more detail, and in so doing discusses one aspect of the present tense which Peter Helias had quite clearly abandoned as fruitless, i.e. whether the present tense refers to that point of time when the verb is uttered - Peter had been content with the idea that the present tense refers to something which takes place at some point in present time rather than be the consignification of present time (2). Siger may, of course, have been lead astray by his false etymology of 'instans' as being 'non stans', a term which he used as the equivalent of 'praesens'; however he comes to the <sup>in</sup>conclusion that we cannot categorically state what the present is, and therefore every form of the present is expressed in the same way (3), which seems a somewhat clumsy way of saying that Latin has no inflectional aspect of the present tense, i.e. the present tense is the least marked of all the tenses of Latin.

Siger divides the preterite into imperfect, perfect and pluperfect, and of the future he states, again in semantic terms, that it has no inflectional aspect (4).

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.112: tempus est modus significandi accidentaliter verbi designans circa rem modum essendi praesentialitatis vel praeteritionis vel futuritionis et dicitur in praesens, praeteritum et futurum.
  - 2) Peter Helias: verbum non consignificat praesens tempus, sed significat aliquid in presenti tempore.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.112: plerumque nobis incertum est et cognitio eius nobis angustissima et dubia, propter quod intellectus noster non potens certe distinguere inter praesentia, una voce contentus est.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p.112: futurum tempus...quia plerumque incertum, est intellectus noster in una voce in ipso contentus.



h) Numerus.

As in figura, the Modistae had very little to add to their description of this category beyond what they had said in their description of number as an accidental mode of the nomen (1) - indeed Siger had nothing to add except to say that it was, like figura, a category common to the nomen, verbum and other partes orationis (presumably declinable partes) and that whatever he had said of numerus in the nomen would apply to numerus as a category of the verbum (2).

Thomas has little more to add, but what he does have to say is significant for its implications for his syntactic theories; he states that number like person is derived from the same properties as in the nomen, i.e. the properties of divisibility and indivisibility (3), but in the case of the verb these are not properties which are innate in the verb but which it acquires by association with the suppositum (4). This anticipates an important aspect of his syntactic theory, i.e. his theory of concord; he argues that the relationships between the members of a construction can be

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1) cf. 5.1112, p. 277-81.

2) Siger de Courtrai, p. 119: figura et numerus sunt modi significandi accidentales communes nomini et verbo et aliis partibus orationis, ideo dicta de eis in nomine ad praesens sufficient.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #77: in utroque numero duae proprietates inveniuntur, scilicet: proprietates indivisibilitatis...et proprietas divisibilitatis. cf. p. 279.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #145: numerus et persona insunt verbo, non ex proprietate suae rei per se loquendo, sed ex proprietate rei suppositi.



either those of government and rection, i.e. proportion, or of concord, i.e. similitudo (1); when however the dependent (2) constructible possesses certain modes of signifying which it acquires however from the properties of the terminant constructible (3), these properties will refer to relationships of concord, not of rection (4), and the verb thus will acquire number and person from the properties found in the suppositum (5).

#### i) Persona

Thomas and Martin of Dacia had set up person as an accidental mode of the nomen (6), and we shall see (7) that person in the pronomen is defined as the same as in the nomen. This has important implications for Thomas's theory of person in the verb, since he has stated already, i.e. when dealing with number, that person and number belong as features of the verb not by virtue of properties inherent

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: quandoque constructibile dependens habet aliquos modos significandi, non ex proprietatibus suae rei per se, sed ex proprietatibus rei constructibilis terminantis; et tunc inter illos modos significandi exigitur similitudo et non proportio.
  - 2) These terms 'dependent' and 'terminant' are discussed along with other terms used in Modistic syntactic theory, cf. 3.13.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: constructibile terminans debet habere modos significandi constructibilis dependentis, ut patet de constructione adiectivi cum substantivo, et in constructione suppositi nominativi casus cum verbo personali.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, # 220: verbum personale habet numerum, et personam, ex proprietatibus rei suppositae; ideo hos modos requirit in supposito, non proportionabiles, sed similes.
  - 5) This description of number provides an interesting example of Modistic procedure of taking the semi-formal descriptions of their precessors and restating them in their own semantic terms.
  - 6) cf. pp.300-2.
  - 7) cf. 5.1142.



in the verb but by virtue of certain properties of the suppositum (1). This means that person in the verb, at least for Thomas, is the accidental mode of signifying by means of which the verb consignifies the property of speaking; this property is however not itself inherent in the verb, but represents a potential connection with the suppositum which already possesses those properties of speaking. It is more marked formally in the verb but represents nonetheless the link with the person of the nominal suppositum which still remains the head of the NV construction; hence person belongs to the verb by virtue of its ability to be linked to the suppositum according to the different predicates the suppositum may have (2). The person of the verb depends, therefore, on the person of the suppositum with which it is connected, i.e. it will be the first person if its suppositum possesses the property of speaking of itself (3).

This means that person, like the other respective accidental modes, is only respective by reason of its association with another feature in the construction, and apart from species and figura which are in any case absolute modes, compositio and significatio are the only true respective

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- 1) This is a typical Modistic way of stating semantically a concord category:
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #145: persona est modus significandi, quo mediante verbum proprietatem loquendi consignificat non inhaerentem de se, sed ut res verbi applicabilis est rei suppositi subsistentis per se secundum proprietates loquendi. Unde persona inest verbo ex aptitudine attribuendi supposito secundum variam attributionem.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #146: illud verbum dicimus esse primae personae attributum, quod est applicabile supposito, prouti stat sub proprietate loquendi de se, et sic de aliis.



modes - it will be remembered that tempus was described (1) as a mode which was not respective with regard to the verb but was respective with regard to adverbs of time. Every other respective mode must be stated in terms of its possible relationship, and person must be included in this general statement, either with the suppositum or the obliquum, or else, as in the case of tempus, with the construction as a whole; compositio thus represents the sum total of mood, person, number and conjugation, just as significatio is the totality of every voice and its relations to the obliquum.

Siger's attitude to the question of person is somewhat different; in the first place, he did not include person as an accidental mode of the nomen, nor did he conceive of the accidental modes of the verb in any form of hierarchy with compositio as a kind of super-mode and with other modes, i.e. mood, person, number and conjugation as its sub-modes. His definition of person is, moreover, almost identical to Thomas's definition of person in the nomen (2) as the property of consignifying the property of speaking and the person speaking (3), so that it will be divided into three persons, and here again Siger's definition of the three persons is almost identical to Thomas's (4) and these persons are 'de se', i.e. of oneself, 'ad alium', i.e. to another, and

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1) cf. p. 377 .

2) cf. pp. 301 .

3) Siger de Courtrai, p.120: persona est modus significandi accidentaliter verbi designans circa rem modum essendi prout convenit alicui sub aliquo modo loquendi.

4) cf. pp. 301 .



'de alio', i.e. of another (1). Person was, for Siger, a respective mode, and though he does not follow Thomas in asserting a necessary dependence of the property of the person of the verb on the person of the suppositum, Siger does mark out as an important feature of person as a constructible element its necessary concord with the suppositum (2).

Siger also introduces the impersonal verb into his section on person and discusses it at great length. He states in effect that an impersonal verb is to all intents and purposes the same as any other verb except that it lacks person and number (3). This is itself an interesting and revealing statement in view of Thomas's argument that the verb possesses person and number only by virtue of its association with the suppositum and derives its person and number from the properties of the suppositum (4), so that an impersonal verb in reality cannot have a nominal suppositum. The Modistae, and in particular Thomas would not, of course, look upon a

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, pp.120-1: prima persona verbi est persona designans circa rem verbi modum loquendi prout convenit alicui sub modo loquendi de se...Secundo persona verbi est persona designans circa rem verbi modum essendi prout convenit alicui sub modo loquendi ad alium...Tertia est persona verbi designans circa rem verbi modum essendi prout convenit alicui sub modo loquendi de alio.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.121: prima est principium constructionis ex parte ante cum supposito sub modo proportionali loquendi.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.121: verbum impersonale..actum significat semper finitum et perfectum, et omnes modos sub modis significandi dependentis et fieri distantis et omnibus modis significandi verbi a quo nascitur, persona et numero tamen solummodo deficiens.
  - 4) cf. p. 379 .



construction such as "percutit Socratem" as an impersonal construction: this is a transitive construction of the VN type (1) similar to "lego librum" with the suppositum subsumed, since, as Thomas tells us (2), it is possible to have a 'congruent' construction in which one member is understood (3). In a construction however, such as "me oportet", the 'me' though the accusative, would be in the first position (in *ratione principii*), but it would not possess the special property of 'ut quem' which it would otherwise have if it were acting as the terminant constructible in a transitive (4) construction such as "lego librum". There would be proportionality (5) of mood with the accusative but no concord (6) of number or person, and 'oportet' is thus a true impersonal verb. Otherwise the impersonal verb, apart from its lack of person and number, possesses like any other verb the same moods, voices, tenses and conjugations.

#### j) Conjugatio.

This has been placed last among the accidental modes since it results, as Thomas says, from the various properties

- 1) cf. 5.24, and 5.242 where constructions such as "lego librum" are discussed.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #222: *congruitas secundum intellectum est, quando ambo constructibilia secundum vocem non sunt expressa, sed alterum ipsorum est ab intellectu apprehensum.*
- 3) Thomas does, in fact, imply that this is a feature with verbs of the first or second person but it seems reasonable to maintain that this would also be true for the third person with the suppositum understood.
- 4) cf. 5.242 and 5.2421 for a description of transitive constructions.
- 5) 'proportio' is discussed in 3.13, p. 99-101.
- 6) Concord is used here as the equivalent term of 'similitudo', cf. 3.13, p. 99-101.



of tense, number, mood and person (1).

It is interesting to see how different the Modistae could be in dealing with the same accidental mode. Michel does not even consider conjugation to be a mode of signifying at all but merely a variation of the expression (*variatio vocis*). Siger, typically enough, does not dwell on the feature as such, and as in the other accidental modes, he is more concerned with a description of the conjugations of the Latin verb. He follows Priscian closely in defining conjugation as the declension of verbs (2), and a conjugation becomes the result of the similar declension of a large number of verbs (3); Siger then describes the four declensions of the Latin verb in similar formal terms.

Thomas likens conjugation in the verb to declension in the nomen, and it will be remembered that he did make a separate statement for *declinatio* (4) though not as a separate mode of signifying; whereas, however, *declinatio* is derived from the inflection of one accident only, i.e. case, and for that reason, like Donatus, declension is included under case, conjugation is the result of the inflections of several accidents, i.e. tense, number, mood and person, and for that reason cannot be placed under any other particular accidental mode, and since it must be included as an accident of the verb,

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #135: *est coniugatio modus significandi rem verbi prout inflectitur per diversas proprietates temporum, numerorum, modorum et personarum.*
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.119: *coniugatio est consequens verborum declinatio.*
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.120: *nominatur coniugatio quasi una eademque ratione declinationis plurima verba coniunguntur.*
  - 4) cf. pp. 297.



it will therefore be described as a separate accidental mode (1). Like Siger, Thomas describes the various conjugations of the verb in formal terms, (even if he does not define the features as such in formal terms (2)), since each conjugation is recognised by means of its expression; such a statement allows Thomas to admit that verbs such as 'sum' and 'volo' have their own conjugation.

The interesting thing is that Thomas's definition of conjugation draws attention to the fact that any definition of conjugation by means of a mode of signifying implies a difference of meaning along with a difference of form. It is however difficult to apply the criterion of meaning to this particular accidental mode, since one may well ask what the semanticisation of conjugatio might be. The difference of form, that the Modistae refer to, is not a purely formal marker, and will of course demand commutation on both sides, i.e. the change of form which occurs with any change of conjugation commutes with some equivalent change in the meaning as a result of some concomitant change of meaning in the tense, mood, person and number.

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, # 135: coniugatio autem attenditur penes inflexionem plurium accidentium; ideo sub nullo proprie et determinate potest comprehendi; et ideo inter alia accidentia Verbi numeratur.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, # 135: coniugatio sit prima, secunda, tertia vel quarta, consequens, vel inconsequens, hoc totum a parte vocis attenditur. Et ex hoc patet, quod sum et volo habent coniugationem, licet non primam, secundam, tertiam, vel quartam.



5113 Participium.

The actual status of the participium has exercised grammarians since the days of Ancient Greece; modern grammarians classify the participle as a part of the verb, but throughout the period of Greek and Latin antiquity and during the Middle Ages it was considered a separate word-class, and treated as such, since it shared features treated as essential to the noun and verb, which prevented its being assigned to either of these word-classes.

Looking back into antiquity from the period of the Modistae, we find a remarkable consistency in the definition of the participle, and it is not until we reach the Modistae that we find any serious departure from the traditional definition, although the Modistae too recognise and state emphatically that the participle shares features belonging to the noun and verb. Thrax defined it as a part of speech sharing the formal and functional characteristics of verb and noun (1). This is the definition which Donatus (2) and Priscian followed, though their definitions do not accentuate the formal and functional to the extent that Thrax and Apollonius did, indeed Priscian does not give any specific definition of the participle and seems to have been content to draw attention to the similarities between the participle and the nomen and verb;

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1) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.40.

2) Donatus: participium quid est? Pars orationis partem capiens nominis, partem verbi; nominis genera et casus, verbi tempora et significationes, utriusque numerum et figuram.



this method provides its own form of definition by contrast, since the features in the participle and the nomen that are alike are quite distinct from those features that the participle and the verb share (1). They seem to have been content merely therefore with stating the similarities between the participle and the verb and the participle and the noun in the form of the accidental features they share, i.e. gender, number and case from the noun and tempus from the verb, though Donatus is perhaps more explicit in that the participle acquires genus and casus from the nomen, tempus and significatio from the verbum, and numerus and figura from both the nomen and verbum.

R.H. Robins, in his discussion of Thrax (2), draws attention to the uneconomical method of separating the participle from the verb, and points out that "the class membership of the two classes, participle and verb, stand in a ~~fix~~ numeral relation to each other", adding that the scholiasts noted that participles were always derived and presupposed a verb. This too was noted by Priscian (3), and also, in a double manner by the Modistae, in that they (i.e. the Modistae) bring the verb into close association with the participle by means of the mode of becoming, flux and succession,

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- 1) Priscian (XI,8): participium est igitur pars orationis, quae pro verbo accipitur, ex quo et derivatur naturaliter, genus et casum habens ad similitudinem nominis et accidentia verbo absque discretionem personarum et modorum.
  - 2) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.97-8.
  - 3) Priscian (VIII,90): participia sine verbis esse non possint. Priscian (XI,2): participium separatim non tradebant partem orationis quod nulla alia pars orationis semper in derivatione est nullam propriam positionem habens, nisi participium.



which they shared as their essential mode of signifying (1), i.e. they have the same matter (*materia*), i.e. *modus esse*, but are differentiated by means of their form (2); the Modistae also recognise the derived nature (3) of the participle by making no mention whatsoever of the accidental mode of species which suggests that they recognised the derived nature of the participle without feeling the need to express this explicitly. We have already seen (4) that the verb possesses two 'species', i.e. *primitiva* and *derivativa*, and by this means different verbs with the same root meaning are derived; similarly the *nomen* (4) possesses the two species and by this means different *nomina* but with the same root meaning are derived. The *Participium* is, to begin with, a derived form from another *pars orationis*, and even in the case of '*fervescens*', this is a derivation from "*fervesco*" which have, therefore, the same one-to-one relationship as "*fervens*" and "*ferves*", but "*fervescens*" and "*fervens*" are both members of the participle word-class. The difference between the participle and the verb is one of *consignification* (5), and therefore syntactic, so that the use of 'species' to account for this distinction must be ruled out, since such distinctions are syntactic; 'species' is by definition an absolute mode, and an absolute mode can never be used to make a

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.123: *est modus significandi generalis participii, modus significandi fieri, motus, fluxus seu esse, qui est principium constructionis, ut dictum est in verbo. Michel de Marbais: participium est pars orationis significans per modum fieri informantis.*
  - 2) A great deal has been said about the use of matter and form by the Modistae in grammatical analysis, cf. pp 69-77 .
  - 3) Siger and Thomas do not mention species as one of the accidents of the participle mentioned by Donatus and Priscian.
  - 4) cf. 5.1122 and 5.1112.
  - 5) cf. 3.11, and 4.1 for the use of this feature.



distinction which is achieved by syntactic means, so that species as a feature of the participle would be quite redundant. If, however, the participle were considered, as it is today, as part of the verb, the difference would be inflectional and would be described by some other accidental mode.

Siger places the participle immediately after the nomen and verb because it portrays features common to these two major declinable partes, i.e. substantia in the nomen and hence the accidental features which stem from substantia, i.e. genus and casus, and action (actus) and hence the accidental features of tempus and significatio from the verb. The participle is therefore midway between the nomen and verb (1).

Thomas agrees that the participle derives from the nomen and verb, hence the origin of the term 'participium', a statement which Siger echoes (2); the participle is therefore for Thomas a pars orationis which signifies by means of the modus esse (3) and belongs to the same binary division of the sentence as the nominal element (substantia) (4). Thomas does not, however, share Siger's idea that the participle

- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.123: est participium medium inter nomen et verbum.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, # 163: dicitur participium, quasi partem nominis et partem verbi capiens.  
Siger de Courtrai, p.123: participium sequitur immediate nomen et verbum quia solum ab eis partem capit; a nomine, scilicet, substantiam et per consequens accidentia eius, scilicet, genus et casum; a verbo actum et per consequens tempus et significationem; ab utroque numerum et figuram.
- 3) Thomas of Erfurt, # 163: modus significandi essentialis generalissimus participii est modus significandi per modum esse indistantis a substantia.
- 4) It is as a result of the difference of its formal element, i.e. indistantia that the participle can function in the same segment of the sentence as the nominal element.



acquires substance from the nomen and action from the verb; he agrees that the participle derives from the nomen and verb but not in terms of the essential part or mode of either, since this would mean that the participle would signify by means of the *modus entis* and the *modus esse* - therefore it derives from the nomen and verb because they have certain accidental modes in common (1). It is interesting to compare the Modistae and the modern critic of Thrax on this particular question and to note their similarity (2).

The difference between Siger and Thomas on the matter of the relation of the participle to the nomen and verb can perhaps be accounted for in terms of the accidental modes of the verb, which, as we have seen (3), are differently organised by Siger and Thomas, the difference being accentuated by their different treatment of the feature of *compositio*, and also in terms of the *materia/forma* contrast which refers particularly to this problem - Thomas makes much more use of this contrast to delineate the different declinable *partes orationis* and especially with reference to this particular problem.

The metaphysical duality of matter and form played, as we have seen (4), an important part in the establishment of the nomen and pronomen as separate *partes orationes*; it is a device used also to distinguish the verb and participle as separate *partes orationis*.

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #163: *dicatur participium capere partem nominis et verbi, quia habet quosdam modos significandi accidentales modis accidentalibus nominis et verbi consimiles*.
  - 2) R.E. Robins, *Thrax*, p.97-8.  
Siger de Courtrai, p.123: *rationabiliter hoc nomen est ei a grammaticis indictum per conformationem duarum partium orationis principalium; nec est participium ab aliqua propria vi sed ab affinitate nominis et verbi nominatum.*
  - 3) cf. p. 34-4.
  - 4) cf. p. 71-2: 223-4: 226, fr. 2



The verb and the participle possess the same matter, i.e. the mode of becoming (*fieri*) but differ by reason of their form, which is expressed in the verb by means of the feature of separation and discreteness (*distantia*) but in the participle by means of non-separation (*indistantia*). The difference of *distantia* and *indistantia* does not effect the subaltern modes of the verb and participle (1); *distantia* might almost be described as the most verb-like feature of the verb and serves to distinguish it from all the other *partes orationis*. It also represents the definition of the verb by means of syntactic criteria, since the verb, by means of *distantia* becomes the *appositum*, and with the *suppositum* creates the basic favourite sentence type of SP, which was, as we shall see (2) the only type of construction which Thomas considered a complete sentence (*constructio perfecta*). The verb, therefore, can in effect be distinguished from the participle by means of syntactic criteria since the participle, by virtue of its essential criterion of '*indistantia*', cannot be constructed with a *suppositum*; there may be intransitive and transitive constructions (3) of the NP or PN type, e.g. *homo legens* or *legens librum* but the first will not be an exocentric construction, since the participle can be constructed only endocentrically but with either a pre-posed or post-posed nominal form. Therefore a construction of the type NP cannot

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- 1) It will be seen that the organisation of the subaltern modes of the verb and participle, and the categories which are derived from such modes are identical.
  - 2) cf. 5.233 for a discussion of *perfectio*.
  - 3) cf. 5.241 and 5.242.



be a construction perfecta such as Thomas described, nor can a construction of the PN type be considered a similar type of construction to the VN type, since the VN type possesses in this relationship the accidental mode of significatio, and accidental mode of the verb (1). The type PN possesses only the accidental mode of 'significatio' which corresponds to 'genus' in the verb (2). The loss of the 'significatio' in the PN type, like the loss of compositio in the NP.type, prevents them from becoming complete 'congruent' constructions.

Indistantia is derived from the same property as the modus adjacentis in the nomen and compositio in the verb, i.e. the property of inherence in terms of esse (3), it is this similarity of the form of the participle to the adjective and that feature of the verb, i.e. compositio, which establishes the concord between the participle and the pre-posed nominal form (though in the case of the verb it is concord of the verb with the suppositum). It is however this relationship of form which permits the participle to function like an adjective and acquire certain features of the adjective, for the participle derives certain of its accidental modes as a result of its form, i.e. genus, numerus; casus and persona are acquired from its association or connection with the pre-posed nominal and significatio and tempus are the only accidental modes which it

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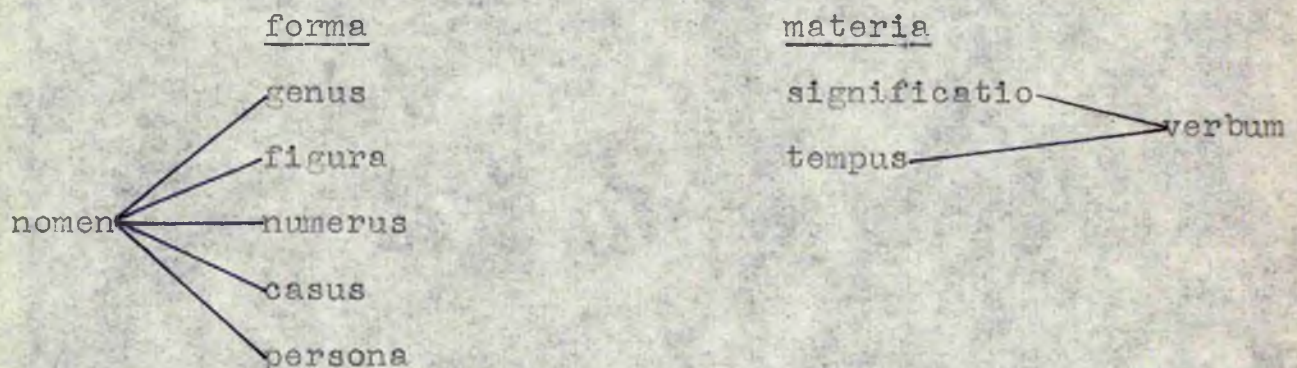
1) cf. 5.1122.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #167: significatio in participio, secundum grammaticos, idem est, quod genus in verbo, et ab eadem proprietate sumitur. Genus autem in verbo...est modus significandi per modum dependentiae verbi ad obliquum post se, in ratione termini; et hoc idem est significatio in participio.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #163: modus indistantis a substantia, seu modus uniti substantiae, sumitur ab eadem rei proprietate...~~in re~~ compositio in verbo; et hoc est proprietates inhaerentis alteri secundum esse.



derives from the verb and which have no connection with its form. The following catalogue of the accidental modes of the participle has been made in terms of the material-formal divisions which shows quite clearly how these features are shared between the nomen and verb as a result of the materia/forma contrast.



It may well have been the confusion created by this formal problem which induced the Modistae to retain the participle as a separate pars orationis, when in reality the participle is clearly, even in Modistic terms, a part of the verb, i.e. by virtue of the essence they have in common.

#### 5.1131 Modus significandi essentialis.

At this stage of our exposition, it is almost possible to predict the nature of the participle, especially as the Modistae were, despite all the criticisms one may make of their technique and especially the criteria used, very consistent in their analytical procedures. We have seen that the nomen and the pronomen constitute a group which combine in terms of their essence and which are differentiated by means of the matter/form contrast; similarly we shall see that the verb and participle make up a group by virtue of the fact that they both possess the features of flux and succession as their essence, and they

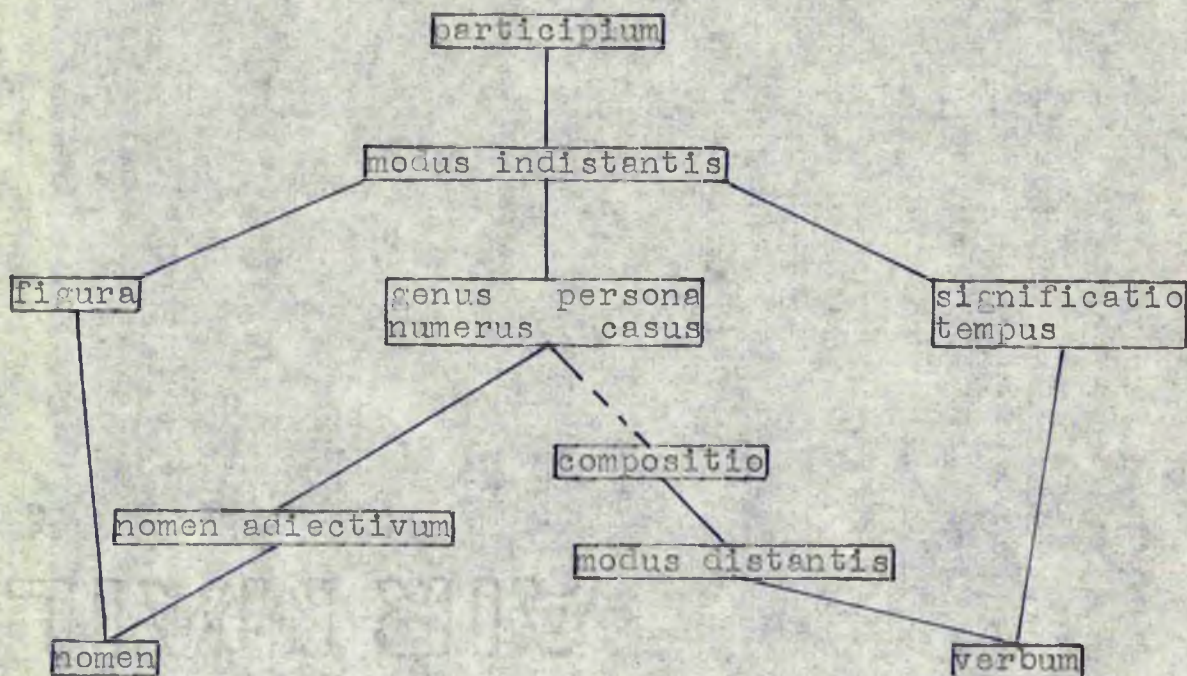


too are separated by means of the matter/form contrast. The verb and participle possess the same matter, i.e. flux and succession, but do not possess the same form; in the verb it is the mode of separation from the substantial element but in the participle it is the mode of non-separation from the substantial element which constitute the form and the differences in form between the verb and participle. We have already seen the organisation of the verb (1) and the effect of form on the organisation of the verb and participle (2); it is also possible to see in Appendix D by means of the diagram the different presentations of Siger and Thomas of the essential and accidental modes of the participle and compare them to the nomen and verb to which the participle is closely connected. The following diagram attempts to show in more detail the inter-relationships

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- 1) cf. p. 327-8 .
  - 2) cf. pp. 328 .



between the nomen, verb and participle (1):



The presentation by the Modistae of the participle follows along the lines already discussed in the nomen and verb. Siger describes the essential mode as general and specific, the general linking the pars in question with the associated pars, and the specific separating it from all the other partes; Thomas starts with his modus generalissimus which contains the same content as Siger's general and specific modes, and this modus generalissimus is divided into modi subalterni and

- 1) The lines on this diagram are intended to show how these accidental modes result from the similarity of the participle to the nomen and the verb. The dotted line linking 'compositio' with the four accidental modes of genus, numerus, persona, and casus is used to indicate that these four accidental modes do not derive from the same property as 'compositio' but from the pre-posed nomen-suppositum, a relationship which is first established by compositio which is used by the verb to counteract the 'distantia' of the verb; the participle, by virtue of its link i.e. non-separation (indistantia) from the nomen, which it derives from its essence, acquires these modes as the nomen adiectivum does, i.e. from the pre-posed substantival form.



subalterni and specialissimi which as a rule consist of different types of the *pars* in question, and which are divided further into sub-categories - a perfect illustration of this was the *nomen* at the level of the *modus generalissimus* divided into *substantivum* and *adiectivum* at the level of *modus subalternus*, and these were further divided into the different types of *substantivum* and *adiectivum* at the level of the *modus specialissimus*.

As in the other *partes*, there are minor divergencies between the *Modistae*, but these do not amount to a different doctrine, and are more often matters of presentation or terminology. Siger describes the general essential mode of the participle as the mode of signifying becoming, movement, flux or *esse*, and the specific mode as the mode of signifying non-separation from the nominal element (1). Michel de Marbais defines the essential mode of the participle similarly by means of two modes, the first being the mode of becoming and flux, and the second the mode of signifying the active or passive union with the nominal element (2) - which suggests that Michel was seeking to stress, more than the other *Modistae*, the verbal quality of the participle in so far as the specific

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.123: *modus significandi specificus participii est modus significandi indistantis seu uniti substantiae; ita quod participium non significat actum ut alterum a substantia sed unitum substantiae*. This is yet another example of the matter-form contrast being used to differentiate the essential modes of a *pars orationis* and stresses the fact that the formal element, i.e. *distantia* in the verb and *indistantia* in the participle serve to 'inform' differently the matter, i.e. *modus esse*, of the verb and participle, with consequent syntactic differences.
  - 2) Michel de Marbais: *duo...sunt modi essentiales ipsius participii, scilicet modus significandi fluxus vel fieri et modus significandi uniti vel concreti cum substantia agente vel patiente, qui ab aliquibus dicitur modus significandi informantis*.



mode is concerned; Michel describes this second mode as the *modus informantis*, i.e. the mode of conferring form on the *pars*, which, as we have seen, was common practice among the *Modistae*, i.e. to distinguish between two *partes* which were linked by their matter by means of the difference in their form. The verb and participle share the material, i.e. the *modus fieri*, but are distinguished by the form, i.e. *distantia* in the verb and *indistantia* in the participle.

Thomas describes the *modus generalissimus* of the participle as the *modus esse* which is not separated from the nominal element (1); in discussing the verb, he had shown (2) how the *modus esse* represents in fact the total of becoming, movement, flux and succession (*fieri*, *motus*, *fluxus*, *successio*), so that Thomas does not differ from either Siger or Michel in the essential mode of the participle - Michel does, however, differ in one minor way, i.e. as in the verb, when he denied *distantia* as an essential feature, so he denies *indistantia* as an essential feature of the participle, though he would admit them as features of these two *partes*. His argument follows very much the pattern he made with reference to *distantia* in the verb (3), though of course in contrast, i.e. that the non-separation of the participle from the *suppositum* refers to its membership of the nominal piece and what is predicated of the participle belongs to the nominal element - the participle is near to the verb in meaning and some syntax, but is distinct from the verb with regard to the minimum SP sentence structure of Latin (4)

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, #163: *modus significandi essentialis generalissimus participii est modus significandi per modum esse indistantia a substantia.*

2) cf. p. 310-16.

3) cf. p. 324.

4) cf. p. 324.



Modus significandi subalternus.

As in the other declinable partes, this division is peculiar to Thomas, and in fact follows exactly the same pattern of analysis as the equivalent section in his description of the verb, and as in the verb as in the other declinable partes the modus generalissimus is used to define the participle and the modus subalternus and specialissimus to describe and catalogue its morphological stock, but in semantic terms.

There is little need to dwell at any length on Thomas's exposition of the subaltern mode and the modus specialissimus since it follows on the pattern of the verb, with the same divisions and sub-divisions (1). The modus generalissimus of the participle is divided into three subaltern modes; the first constitutes the participium substantivum and is the mode of signifying some special being by means of the modus esse, e.g. ens, existens (2): the second constitutes the participium vocativum and signifies the property of naming by means of the modus esse, e.g. vocans, nominans (3): the third is the modus signifying action or passion (4), and would seem to contain all the participles except those mentioned in the first two subaltern modes - this constitutes the participium adiectivum and is the only subaltern mode to be subdivided

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1) cf. pp. 330-32.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #164: primus modus est modus significandi per modum esse generaliter respectu cuiuslibet esse specialis. Et hic modus constituit participium substantivum, ut ens, existens.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #164: secundus est modus significandi per modum esse generalis, respectu nominationis propriae tantum. Et hic modus constituit participium vocativum, ut nominans, vocans.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, //164: tertius est modus significandi per modum esse specialis actionis, vel passionis. Et hic modus constituit participium adiectivum.



into modi specialissimi.

There are four modi specialissimi of the participium adiectivum - again as in the verb; the first is the mode of signifying action only, e.g. amans, the second is the mode of signifying passion only e.g. amatus, the third is the mode of signifying neither action nor passion, e.g. currens, and the fourth is the mode of signifying both action and passion, e.g. criminans, criminatus (1).

The modus specialissimus represents the full semantic statement of the essence of the participle; so that we can start with the modus generalissimus which is the general description of its essence, i.e. esse and indistantia, the modus subalternus defines it as substantive, vocative or adjective, and if adjective, the modus specialissimus types it as active or passive, or neither, etc.

We can summarise the essential mode of the participle thus; the modus generalissimus is divided into three modi subalterni, the last of which is divided into four modi specialissimi. Similarly, the participle is divided into the substantive, vocative, and adjective participles, which are represented by the modi subalterni, and the adjective participle is divided into active, passive, neuter and common which are described in the four modi specialissimi.

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #165: primus est modus significandi per modum actionis tantum--ut legens, amans.- Secundus modus est modus significandi per modum passionis tantum..ut amatus, legens.- Tertius est modus significandi per modum neutrius..ut currens.- Quartus est modus significandi per modum utriusque simul..ut criminans, criminatus.



5.1132 Modus significandi accidentalis.

The Modistae do not have a great deal to say about the accidental modes of the participium, but the little they do reinforces earlier statements about the intimacy which is very necessary between the essential and accidental modes of the pars in question, and about the doubtful status of the participle, at least in modern practice.

Both Siger and Thomas retain, as the accidental modes of the participle, the six accidents which Donatus and Priscian had ascribed to the participle, i.e. significatio, genus, tempus, numerus, figura and casus; to these Thomas added persona, which he includes as an accidental mode of the participle for the same reason that he included it as an accidental mode of the verb, i.e. that it is in effect derived from the suppositum, i.e. the nomen. These, significatio and tempus are derived from the verb, and genus, numerus, figura, casus and persona are derived from the nomen; significatio is derived from the same property as genus in the verb which is very reminiscent of Donatus and Priscian and also very close to Siger, since it will be remembered that Thomas had made of significatio in the verb an accidental mode which was related to but separate from the accidental mode of genus, whereas Donatus, Priscian and Siger had used significatio as a synonym of genus. The other accidental modes derive from the same properties as in the nomen or verbum.

One of the most important features of Thomas's exposition of the accidental modes of the verb was the use of compositio and significatio to express the relations between the verb and the suppositum and the verb and the post-posed oblique; the



quality of these relationships was expressed by further accidental modes, i.e. mood (modus) expressed the quality of the compositio (1), and voice (genus) expressed the quality of the significatio (2).

Significatio is also an accidental mode of the participle and is derived from the same property as genus in the verb (3). It seems indeed to represent a combination of significatio and genus which, as has been stated, were closely related as accidental modes of the verb. Significatio in the participle is derived from the same property as genus in the verb and represents the dependence of the participle on a post-posed oblique nominal (4): this relationship is potential rather than actual in that like the verb, it can have a transitive object but does not necessarily have to have one (5). The actual quality of the relationship may be, as in the verb, active or passive and this is established entirely by the expression, i.e. vox (6), which is in fact a formal statement ~~and~~ a morphological one.

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1) cf. p. 351.

2) cf. p. 361.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #167: significatio in participio, secundum grammaticos, idem est, quod genus in verbo, et ab eadem proprietate sumitur. Just as compositio is not needed in the participle in view of its indistantia from the nominal element which will be the suppositum, since compositio in the verb (cf. 5.1212) serves to restore the relationship between the subject and the predicate, so significatio, which serves as a balance to compositio (cf. 3.12), will not be required in the participle and becomes in fact the same as genus, which, as we saw in the verb (cf. 5.1212) states the quality of the relationship between the verb and the post-posed nominal-oblique.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #157: genus in verbo...est modus significandi per modum dependentiae verbi ad obliquum post se in ratione termini; et hoc idem est significatio in participio.

5) Thomas of Erfurt, #167: hic modus est modus significandi in ratione termini absolute, et non contracti, tamen contrahitur.

6) Thomas of Erfurt, //167: aliquod participium sit significat-  
ionis activae, vel passivae, et sic de aliis, hoc totum de  
parte vocis attenditur.



Thomas has nothing to say of tempus as an accidental mode of the participle except to say that it derives from the same property as in the verb; in such a case, tempus as we have seen (1) does not result from relations with either the suppositum or the oblique. Siger has a little more to say but adds little if anything to the theory of tempus as a feature of the participle, and <sup>it</sup> is, as is often the case in Siger's discussions of the other accidental modes, a discussion of tempus as a feature of the Latin participle, and in particular its various lacunae as a Latin participle.

Thomas has nothing at all to say about figura in addition to what he said of it in the nomen, and he omitted altogether the accidental mode of species which, along with figura were the absolute accidental modes of the nomen and verb and together had constituted their derivational features. Siger, however, does say of figura, that a participium such as <sup>\*</sup>"indocens" can be described either as a figura composita, and as such will be analysed as /in-/ and /-docens/ or else as a figura decomposita and as such will presumably (2) be analysable as from <sup>\*</sup>"indoceo" and may be <sup>\*</sup>/indoc-/ and /ens/; thus, as in the nomen, a participle can be of either figura

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1) cf. p. 377 .

2) 'Presumably', because Siger does not in fact offer any analysis of any decomposita.



simplex or figura composita, or figura simplex or figura decomposita, but there is no real difference between composita and decomposita since they have the same class membership (1) and therefore they do not constitute, as in the nomen (2), separate sub-modes of figura (3); Thomas, in the nomen, required three types of figura, i.e. simplex, composita, and decomposita. Siger had postulated two, i.e. simplex and composita with decomposita really as a sub-class of composita: Siger in the participle sets up two binary oppositions of simplex-composita and simplex-decomposita, but the binary opposition of composita - decomposita is absent from the participle. The reason for this can probably be related to the absence of 'species' as the companion absolute mode, since the participles were always considered to be derived (therefore it can only be a species derivativa) from a verb and presupposed a verb (4), so that the participle itself a derived form will always be structured on a verb of either simple, or derived species. The participle with a figura composita will be derived from a combination of figura simplex with a figura simplex already derived from a verb, but the participle with a figura decomposita must be derived from a verb with a figura

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.124: participium ut: indocens... diversiter possunt considerari. Uno modo, prout a verbo compositione figurae determinatur, et sic, omne participium aut est simplicis figurae aut decompositae. Alio modo, prout componitur ab 'in' et 'docens' et sic est compositae figurae, ita quod unum et idem diversis respectibus potest esse compositae figurae vel decompositae.
  - 2) cf. p. 356-7.
  - 3) cf. Siger's treatment of figura as an accidental mode of the nomen, cf. p. 256-63.
  - 4) R. B. Robins, Thrax, p.97, fn. 3.



composita. A figura decomposita must always presuppose a figura composita; a figura composita will always presuppose a figura simplex, but a figura decomposita may never presuppose a figura simplex. A participle with a figura composita must therefore consist of a combination of a figura simplex and a figura simplex, i.e. "\*indocens" will be a figura composita consisting of "in" and "docens" which is itself however derived from "doceo" (1), or it can be made up of parts which as parts have no separate individual meaning, but whatever its composition, the meaning will remain the same.

There are two interesting gaps in the inventory of accidental modes of the participle, i.e. species and compositio with mood (modus). Much has already been said about the similarities and dissimilarities ~~and dissimilarities~~ between the nomen and pronomen, and the verb and participle; the verb and participle have the same essential features of modus esse which in both partes is derived from the property of flux and succession, but they are rendered distinct by the fact that the verb must also be discrete (distans) from the suppositum while the participle will not be discrete (indistans) from the suppositum. It will be remembered that compositio and its concomitant of mood (modus) were required to 'repair the damage' caused by discreteness as an essential feature of

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1) There is however no such verb as "\*indoceo", so that "\*indocens" cannot be a derivative of it.



the verb (1); if, however, the whole concept of discreteness is abandoned, there is clearly no need to retain compositio and mood, which accounts for their absence as accidental modes of the participle.

It must not be imagined, however, that compositio is ignored altogether as a feature of the participle; Thomas tells us, as has already been pointed out (2), that the mode of non-separation from the substance is derived from the same property as *modus adiacentis* in the *nomen* and *compositio* in the *verbum* are derived. This has important implications for the creation of the accidental modes of the participle in that the adjectival nature of the participle and the accidental modes which ensue from this are created as a result of this ability to associate with and be dependent on the *suppositum*; Thomas has already stated (3) that the verb acquires the accidental modes of person and number not from its own properties but from the properties of the *suppositum*. Similarly, he tells us that the participle acquires the accidental modes of gender (4), number, and case, as the *nomen adiectivum* does, as a result of a property in common (5), and the participle thus acquires the features of person and number, as the verb

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1) cf. p. 350 .

2) cf. p. 393 .

3) cf. p. 379 .

4) Siger argues that genus in the participle derives from the same property in the *nomen*, cf. p. 271-2, which is the property of active or passive creation, e.g. *generans* is masculine and *nubens* is feminine; Siger de Courtrai, p. 124: *natura participii ita communis est trium generum quod siue vituperationis causa siue figurae participia apta maribus.*

5) Thomas of Erfurt, #163: *proprietas inhaerentis alteri secundum esse.*



does, from this same property, i.e. *proprietas inhaerentis*. This serves to underline those features that the *nomen*, verb and participle have in common and which they derive in fact from the *nomen* (1), but it also illustrates that between the verb and the participle it is the necessary presence of *compositio* in the verb and its necessary absence in the participle which render these accidental modes possible.

Species is not included among the accidental modes of either the pronoun or the participle; Thomas tells us (2) that what was species in the *nomen*, an absolute accidental mode, becomes in the pronomen a subaltern mode and is used to create different types of pronoun.

The absence of species as an accidental mode of the participle is very revealing; it will be remembered that species in the verb was divided into primitive and derivative (3), and that the derivative changed the morphemic shape of the verb by the process of adding a meaning to a meaning, - in other words the verb is built on a semantic root which does not change. This is, of course, not possible in the participle and serves to underline the precariousness of the independence of the participle as a separate *pars orationis*. The reason for the absence of species is that any participle is a derived form in the first place, so that "docens" will be derived from "doceo" though not in the same sense that "montanus" was derived from "mons" and in instances such as "fervescens" we

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, #168: *nomina adiectiva, et pronomina, quae tot sunt adiectiva, et participia adiectiva, habent casus, numerum, genus, et personas, non ex parte suae rei, per se loquendo, sed ex parte rei subiectae.*

2) cf. p. 430 .

3) cf. p. 369 .



have a derived form from a verb that is already a 'species derivativa'. This reinforces the argument that morphology was not considered by the Modistae as ever really pertinent to grammatical analysis; the Modistae for the most part described the inflectional and derivational systems according to their adaption of the "word and paradigm" method (1); i.e. by stating each of these according to their meaning and not according to their form. The participle shares its general essential features with the verb and yet is discrete from the verb by virtue of a feature of its essence i.e. indistantia which brings it close, in effect, to the nomen; its accidental modes are derived from both the nomen (2) and the verb (3).

It has been pointed out (4) that Greek (and also Latin) has two major syntactical relations, and this <sup>was</sup> also suggested by the Modistae almost to the exclusion of any other type of construction (5); the first is the concord of gender, number, case and (in the case of Thomas) person with the pre-posed nominal suppositum, and the second is that of government between the verb and the post-posed oblique which is expressed by means of significatio. It should be noted that the participle derives all the accidental modes which express

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- 1) C.F. Lockett, Two Models of Grammatical Description, Word 10 (1954), p.210. R.E. Robins, Thrax, p.92.
  - 2) Nomen is used throughout in preference to noun, since nomen includes both substantive and adjective, and in order to distinguish them (nomen) substantivum and (nomen) adiectivum would be used: verbum does not present any such division and the term 'verb' can be used without any danger of confusion.
  - 3) Thomas refers more than once to the adjectival nature of some of the functions of the participle; it is this duality which has produced, in traditional grammars, monstrosities such as "verbal-adjective".
  - 4) R.E. Robins, Thrax, p.97-8.
  - 5) cf. pp. 546-7.



the first relationship from the nomen, as indeed the verb, as we have already seen (1), derives its number and person from the pre-posed suppositum; the participle derives the accidental modes, which express the second relationship, from the verb, so that the participle can "contract both these sorts of relations, and can exhibit them both in the same sentence" (2). It is implied here that the Greek grammarians kept the participle as a separate word-class as a result of the duality of its syntactic relations; the Modistae were not overtly prompted by such formal considerations, but quite clearly were impelled to do so as a result of the 'mixed' nature of the participle (3), and it may have been metaphysical criteria just as much as grammatical considerations which induced them to do this. This is, of course, a reference to one of the major influences on their work, i.e. contemporary metaphysics: in this instance the retention of the participle as a separate word-class also coincides with the scheme of the classical grammarians, another great influence on the theories of the Modistae who were thus able to order their semanticised word-classes, which are restatements of the more formal divisions of their classical predecessors, to fit both the requirements of contemporary metaphysics (4) and the organisation of their classical predecessors.

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1) cf. pp. 380-1.

2) R.E. Robins, *Thrax*, p.98.

3) Siger de Courtrai, p.123: eodem modo imaginandum est de participio sicut de actu permixto potentiae.

4) This is a suggestion that Modistic use of the matter-form contrast (cf. 3.11), the idea of which they took from their metaphysics and used as a grammatical opposition, induced them to retain the verb-participle distinction, since the verb and participle are alike in their matter but differ in their form.



5.114 Pronomen

The Greek grammarians, e.g. Thrax and Apollonius had defined the pronoun as a "part of speech used in place of the noun and indicative of specific personal references" (1). Priscian followed the Greeks in his definition of the pronoun in that it is used instead of a nomen and signifies certain persons (2); there is one significant difference between Priscian and his predecessors, i.e. he abandons their formal definition to the extent of admitting as pronouns only those words (3) which designate substance, independently of its qualities. It would not do to make too much of this, because Priscian did not develop his theory of substance as a feature of the pronoun, and it must also be remembered that matters such as the relation of matter and form to substance are subjects quite foreign to Priscian, who, as a 'literary' grammarian, was not interested in philosophy and made use of logic only insofar as it contributed to the definition of a grammatical feature.

This question of substance is, however, of some importance in discussing the pronomen since it indicates a definite difference between Priscian and Donatus, and has important implications for the development of the theory of the pronoun

(1) R.H. Robins, A.&M. p.40.

(2) Priscian (XII,1); pronomen est pars orationis, quae pro nomine proprio uniuscuiusque accipitur personasque finitas recipit.

(3) Priscian (XVII.37): ~~pronomina~~ nomina et finita volunt esse et loco priorum accipiuntur et substantiam solum sine qualitate significant, quantum in ipsa voce est eorum, cum supra dicta generalia nomina penitus sunt infinita confusione omnium sub se specierum.



in the Middle Ages.

Priscian's grammatical categories have been referred to as 'quasi formal' - quasi being used to indicate that he also used other, i.e. semantic criteria in his definitions, one of the criteria he had introduced into his definition of the nomen had been substance, but a substance with a specific or common quality (1); in contrast to the nomen, the pronoun, although it too suggested substance, did so without referring to any quality, so that this substance became the principal criterion for the semantic content of the pronoun. Priscian and the Modistae made no deliberate use of the idea of linguistic compensation - naturally enough, but Priscian introduced a concept which in fact compensated to some extent for the loss of quality as a criterion for the pronoun; this concept was the use of 'demonstratio' and 'relatio' - (we shall see very shortly that the Modistae, especially Thomas, made great use of this): demonstratio and relatio were used to express the idea of the presence (demonstratio) or absence (relatio) of substance in the pronoun. (This was associated with person (2), and can be thought of, as far as some pronouns are concerned, in

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(1) Priscian (II,18): proprium est nominis substantiam et qualitatem significare.

Priscian (II, 22): nomen est pars orationis, quae unicuique subiectorum corporum seu rerum communem vel propriam qualitatem distribuit.

(2) Priscian (XII,14): in prima quidem et secunda persona pronomen ponitur, in tertia vero non, nisi demonstratione egeat vel relatione.

Priscian (XVII, 65): prima et secunda persona, in quibus sola est demonstratio.



equivalent terms to subjectivity and objectivity). It must be stated quite emphatically at this stage that the Priscianic and Modistic use of demonstratio and relatio bears no resemblance to the conventional use of demonstrative and relative as features of the pronouns of the standard Indo-European languages. This concept of the pronoun lead Priscian to consider only fifteen words as pronouns, e.g. ego, tu, ille, ipse, hic, is, sui, meus, tuus, suus, noster, vester, nostras, vestras, all of which express to a greater or lesser extent the presence or absence of substance, and all other words which are traditionally referred to as pronouns, e.g. demonstrative, relative, interrogative pronouns, were rigorously excluded: Thomas followed Priscian in his description of the pronoun, in that although he does not list all the words he considers to be pronouns, it is quite clear that he accepted as pronouns the fifteen pronouns that Priscian described.

This stresses a very important difference between Priscian and Donatus and which was to have a very great influence on their successors in the Middle Ages; Priscian used demonstratio and relatio, not as accidents of the pronoun, but as features of the substance which he introduced as a characteristic of the pronoun. Donatus, on the other hand, included qualitas which he divided into specific (finita) and non-specific (infinita) - Thomas informs us <sup>(1)</sup> that qualitas finita is demonstratio and

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #106: notandum, quod qualitatem, quam Donatus assignat pro accidente pronominis, dividit in qualitatem finitam et infinitam, et vocat illos duos modos significandi essentielles speciales pronominis, scilicet demonstrationem, et relationem.



qualitas infinita is relatio, - as an accident of the pronoun (1), but this is in complete contrast to Priscian who had excluded qualitas altogether as a feature of the pronoun. Donatus had used qualitas finita to describe those pronouns which are restricted in concord to a particular person of the verb, e.g. ego, tu, ille, and qualitas infinita to describe those pronouns which are not so restricted, i.e. qui, quae, quod, etc. Priscian disagrees with this and argues that words such as 'quis, qui', etc. are in fact unspecified nomina which signify substance and an infinite quality, which is in opposition to Priscian's definition of the pronoun as signifying substance but without quality (2).

This has important implications since it was quite clearly Priscian and not Donatus whom Peter Helias and the Modistae followed. Thomas refers to Donatus explicitly (3) only in order to demonstrate how he, Thomas, differs from Donatus; the difference between Thomas and Donatus is largely one of organisation and terminology, whereas their grammatical doctrine is

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(1) Donatus: qualitas pronominum in quo est? Bipertita est; aut enim finita sunt pronomina aut infinita. Quae sunt finita? Quae recipiunt personas, ut ego, tu, ille. Quae sunt infinita? Quae non recipiunt personas, ut quis, quae, quod.

(2) Priscian (XIII,31): 'quis' quoque quamvis substantiam sine aliqua certa qualitate demonstret, hoc tamen interest inter substantiam illam, quam pronomina significant, quod illa pro speciali et propria uniuscuiusque accipiuntur substantia, quae demonstratione praesentium vel relatione absentium personarum intelligitur, hoc autem generale et infinitam substantiam, quae pertinet ad universarum rerum generare et species et partes, demonstrat. Quomodo igitur numeros et quantitates inter species qualitatis nominum accipimus, sic etiam infinitam et generalem substantiam, quae ex eo componuntur, in hoc esse dicimus qualitatem. Habet igitur etiam qualitatem, quam desiderat nomen.

(3) cf. fn. on previous page.



very much the same, e.g. Donatus assigns *qualitas*, which he divides into *qualitas finita* and *qualitas infinita*, to be an accident of the pronoun, but, as we shall see, *demonstratio* which he derives from Donatus's *qualitas finita* and *relatio* which he derives from *qualitas infinita* become in Thomas's scheme subaltern modes of the pronoun; Thomas and Donatus differ terminologically in that Thomas restates the formal definitions of Donatus in his own characteristically semantic terms. Thomas makes *demonstratio* and *relatio* into subaltern modes <sup>(1)</sup> stating that these are the same as Donatus's *qualitas* divided into *qualitas finita* and *qualitas infinita*. Thomas does this, not because the pronomen *demonstrativum* and the pronomen *relativum* constitute a sub-class of pronoun but because *demonstratio* and *relatio* are used to represent aspects of the essence of the pronomen, i.e. presence (*praesentia*) or absence (*absentia*) of the essence of the pronoun, i.e. presence or absence as features of substance, which is itself the essential feature of the pronoun <sup>(2)</sup>. The difference between Modistic and modern or traditional use of *demonstratio* and *relatio*

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #100: *modus significandi, qui vocatur demonstratio, sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est proprietas certitudinis, et praesentiae...hunc modum Donatus vocat qualitatem finitam; et hic modus constituit pronomen demonstrativum.*

Thomas of Erfurt, #101: *modus significandi, qui vocatur relatio, sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est proprietas absentiae, et incertitudinis...unde Donatus appellat istum modum qualitatem pronominis infinitam; et hic modus constituit pronomen relativum.*

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #100: *sic contingit dare diversos modos certitudinis, et praesentiae; et secundum hoc erunt diversi modi demonstrationum; et ex consequenti diversa pronomina demonstrativa. Contingit enim rem esse praesentem et certam, et maxime certam vel praesentem, et sic demonstratur per hoc pronomen 'ego'; vel non maxime esse certam et praesentem, et sic demonstratur per hoc pronomen 'tu', et alia similia.*



cannot be sufficiently stressed (1). Priscian, it will be remembered, excluded such words as 'quis, qui, cuius', etc. from the category of pronoun on the grounds that they signified substance with quality. Demonstratio and relatio represent the presence or absence of certain properties and because they derive from the property of matter (2), they are potentially present in every pronoun (3).

It is not entirely fortuitous that in the whole of his discussion of the pronoun, Thomas refers only to pronouns such as e.g. ego, tu, sui, hic, ille, meus, tuus, suus, nostras, vestras, which were those defined by Priscian as pronouns, and

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(1) It is possible to argue that Thomas arrived at his conception of demonstratio and relatio by means of a form of reconciliation of Donatus and Priscian; Donatus used qualitas to differentiate between the pronouns that could possess person and those that cannot, while Priscian associated person with demonstratio and relatio. Thomas used Donatus's division of demonstratio and relatio, i.e. the degree of the presence or absence of substance in the pronoun. These features can never be present together at the same time in the same pronoun, though certain pronouns may be capable of suggesting both features but, of course, in different contexts. In certain pronouns, e.g. the substantive pronouns, demonstratio and relatio can be associated with the idea of subjectivity or objectivity; the first person pronoun entirely subjective, the second person pronoun is less subjective than the first person pronoun but more so than the third person pronoun which is in fact entirely objective. The first person pronoun could be described Modistically as demonstrative, the second person pronoun as less demonstrative and to some extent relative, and the third person pronoun may well be relative but will be demonstrative to a much lesser degree than either the first or the second person pronouns.

(2) cf. 3.11 where this and other associated terms are discussed.

(3) F.C. Copleston, *Op.cit.* p.86: "if we think away all forms and all determinate characteristics we arrive at the notion of a purely indeterminate constitutive principle which is capable of existing successively in union with an indefinite multiplicity of forms."



makes no mention whatsoever of 'quis, qui', etc., which had been included by Donatus as pronouns (1). Thurot tells us (2) that Michel de Marbais sought to reconcile the definitions of Donatus and Priscian, but had to admit defeat, though Michel does, furthermore, suggest that even among his, e.g. Michel's contemporaries, there was disagreement about the nature of 'quis, qui', etc. (3); (could this be a reference to Siger's probable inclusion of *qualitas* as an accidental mode and hence possible inclusion of 'quis, qui', among the pronouns?).

The Modistae were obviously also influenced by Peter Helias whom they tended to accept often as their immediate model (4); he followed Priscian in his theory of the pronoun, but moves forward in the sense that he developed the idea of pronouns designating substance further than Priscian had done. Peter could call on contemporary philosophical theories of substance, matter and form to support his theory (5); Peter distinguished three

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- (1) A major divergence between Thomas and Siger in the nomen had been their assignment of *qualitas* - Thomas as a *modus subalter-nus* and Siger as a *modus accidentalis*; it would have been interesting to compare them on their assignment of *qualitas* in the pronoun - it seems probable that Siger would have included it as an accidental mode, following Donatus in this, which would, of course, have been entirely consistent, but Siger is unfortunately incomplete and this section is lacking from his work.
- (2) Cf. Thurot, Op.cit., p.173.
- (3) Michel de Marbais: *quis et qui non sunt pronomina, sed potius nomina... Et hoc etiam est de intentione Prisciani. Unde Donatus et Priscianus de hoc fuerunt contrarie opinionis, et adhuc moderni grammatici contrariuntur super hoc plurimum.*
- (4) It is interesting and revealing to compare the relationship between Peter Helias and his successors who might be said to constitute his school, and between the creators and members of many modern schools of linguistic doctrine, and how the founder left to his followers the task of refining the original inspiration.
- (5) F.C. Copleston, Op.cit., p.87: This theory of matter and form was not new. Derived from Aristotle it was common property in the Middle Ages, though different thinkers propounded it in different ways.



senses of the word 'substantia' according to which it signifies matter, form or a composition of matter and form <sup>(1)</sup>. This last meaning agrees with the definition of the nomen as signifying substances and quality and the first agrees with the definition of the pronoun as signifying substance but without quality. This is a dualism which we find throughout Modistic grammatical analysis, especially in their description of the partes orationis, and represents a major advance on their part from Peter Helias <sup>(2)</sup>; it is particularly fundamental to their separation of the pronomen from the nomen, and the participium from the verbum. All four declinable partes possess materia, i.e. modus entis in the nomen and pronomen and modus esse in the verbum and participium, but only the nomen, verbum and participium possess forma, i.e. determinata apprehensio in the nomen, distantia in the verbum, and indistantia in the participium.

As far as the nomen and pronomen are concerned, we can say that the nomen possesses form and that the pronomen does not. Roos argues <sup>(3)</sup> that the modus entis represents the form of the pronomen, and the indeterminata apprehensio the matter of the pronomen; this seems difficult to reconcile, and it seems more accurate to say that the pronomen, as Thomas implies, does not possess form but is capable of being determined by form <sup>(4)</sup> - it

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(1) H. Roos, Op.cit. p.147: Roos argues that Peter, though he used the contrast of materia/forma, did not apply the theory to his description of the partes orationis.

(2) H. Roos, Op.cit., p.148: Martinus de Dacia hat als einer der ersten das Begriffspaar: forma/materia systematisch in die Behandlung der 'partes orationis' aufgenommen.

(3) H. Roos, Op.cit., p.147.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #96: ab ista proprietate materiae primae, quae est proprietas de se indeterminata, determinabilis tamen per formam, sumitur modus significandi essentialis generalissimus pronominis.



would be mistaken to say that this represents an absence (privatio) of form but rather that form is neither included nor excluded but present as a potential element to determine the first matter <sup>(1)</sup>, i.e. something 'uninformed' but 'informable', what Copleston described as "a purely indeterminate potential element which has no definite form of its own and no definite characteristics" <sup>(2)</sup>.

This was a fundamental distinction for the Modistae and had a profound effect on their organisation and analysis of the four declinable partes orationis. We have already seen in the nomen <sup>(3)</sup>, that Thomas, for whom determinata apprehensio was the equivalent of qualitas, i.e. derived from the property of form, used this factor of form and its varieties, to distinguish in his subaltern modes, different types of nomen; in the pronomen, however, the feature of indeterminata apprehensio, which implies that form and quality are immanent <sup>(4)</sup> rather than absent, is not capable of distinguishing different types of pronoun, and demonstratio and relatio in the subaltern modes do not create different types of

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(1) Thomas of Erfurt, #97: illud, quod sic est indeterminatum, quod non excludit, nec includit formam, nec formae determinationem, non est privativum; et sic se habet modus significandi pronominis, qui est modus indeterminati de se, determinabilis tamen. F.C. Copleston, Op.cit., p.93: "First matter, considered in abstraction, is pure potentiality for successive actualisation by substantial forms, each of which stands to its matter as act to potentiality, actualising the matter's potentiality."

(2) F.C. Copleston, Op.cit., p.86.

Siger de Courtrai, p.125: finitatio est formae et quia materia prima non determinat sibi aliquam formam, sed est in potentia ad omnem formam.

(3) cf. p. 222-3.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #96: materia prima, extra indeterminata est, respectu cuiuslibet forma naturalis, quae in est de se, ita quod nec includit nec ~~excludit~~ formam (my italics).



pronoun but different values of the same pronoun. Thomas includes 'qualitas' as a feature of the pronoun, but it cannot be a criterion of the *modus generalissimus* since the pronoun does not possess form: *qualitas* in the *nomen* he derived from Donatus and defined as the subaltern modes which produced the '*nomen proprium*' and '*nomen appellativum*' (1); in the pronoun, *qualitas* is also included as <sup>a</sup>~~criteria~~ for the subaltern modes but ~~does~~ not create different types of pronoun (as *qualitas* had done in the *nomen*) - instead *qualitas* produces '*demonstratio*' and '*relatio*' which can be described briefly as two qualities, never present together, of the pronoun (2).

There was a large measure of agreement between the Modistae in their definition of the pronoun; they were agreed on its 'substantial' nature, on the close relationship between the *nomen* and the *pronomen*, and on the absence of *qualitas* as a feature of the *pronomen*.

Michel de Marbais describes the pronoun as a *pars orationis* signifying substance which is specifiable by means of another element (3), which is very much the same as Martin of Dacia and Thomas of Erfurt (4), for whom the pronoun signifies by means of the *modus entis*, a term they chose in preference to *substantia*, which however the *nomen* and *pronomen* both express, and by means

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(1) cf. 5.1111.

(2) cf. p. 411.

(3) Michel de Marbais: *pronomen est pars orationis significans per modum substantie specificabilis per alterum unumquodque*.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #98: *pronomen est pars orationis significans per modum entis, et indeterminatae apprehensionis*.



of indeterminata apprehensio which distinguishes the pronomen from the nomen - as we have seen, this indeterminata apprehensio is derived from the property of first matter but is determinable by means of form, a statement very similar in intent to Michel's. Siger represents a combination of the ancient and contemporary tradition; he too describes the pronoun as signifying by means of the modus entis <sup>(1)</sup>, which he equates, as he did with the nomen, to the modes of substance, state or permanence, and which is identical to his definition of this aspect of the nomen. Siger, however, prefers Priscian's term that the pronomen signifies without qualitas, and makes no use of the idea of indeterminata apprehensio; determinata apprehensio was a term used by Thomas to refer to qualitas, and is derived from the property of form <sup>(2)</sup> - this suggests that indeterminata apprehensio indicates **the absence** or non-presence, rather than the deprivation of form, and for this reason it is difficult to accept Roos's argument of ascribing both matter and form <sup>(3)</sup> to the nomen and pronomen.

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.124: modus significandi per quem pronomen est pronomen est modus significandi substantiae, habitus permanentis, seu entis.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #25: per qualitatem, modum qualitatis, qui est modus determinatae apprehensionis, sumptus a proprietate formae et qualitatis, qui est modus determinationis.

(3) cf. p. 417.



5.1141 Modus significandi essentialis.

A great deal has perforce been said on the use of the metaphysical device of matter and form by the Modistae, especially Thomas, to distinguish and compare the four declinable partes orationis; this particular feature is mentioned at this stage of the discussion of the essential mode of the pronomen, since it has a very striking effect not only on the theory of the pronomen but also on the presentation of Modistic theories of the pronomen.

As in the nomen and verb, the Modistae remain consistent in their presentation of the essential mode of the pronoun which, as in the other declinable partes, Siger divides into general and specific, the content of which Thomas combines into his modus generalissimus to form his definitions of the pars, and which he will describe and catalogue in greater detail in his modi subalterni and specialissimi.

This process of dividing the definition of the essential mode into two parts derives from the contrast of matter and form, the first part being the material and which was shared by the two partes which together signified by means of the modus entis or the modus esse, and the second part being the formal and which served to separate the partes which possessed the same matter, thus permitting them to act as independent discrete partes; it is from the second 'part' of the essential mode that the various types of the pars in question are established, i.e. by means of the modi subalterni and specialissimi.



We see, therefore, that the nomen and the pronomen are alike materially but differ formally - but this is not the whole picture because the pronoun differs in fact from the nomen by virtue of the fact that the pronoun has no form, but is merely informable (1). This absence of form does not in any way prevent Thomas, who makes much more deliberate use in presenting his actual doctrine than does Siger of the terminology of the matter/form contrast, from describing the pronoun by means of the subaltern modes, etc., and then by the accidental modes; but it does have the effect that the subaltern modes are no longer the stage at which the pronouns are categorised but described in more detail.

One of the most distinctive features of Thomas's method of presenting his grammatical theory was his use of Donatus's organisation of grammatical data, as well as the data itself; in this he differs a great deal from Siger, the reason for this being probably Thomas's use of the modi subalterni and specialissimi to catalogue those words which possess the same essence and 'secondary' or distinctive feature of this essence, e.g. the nomen possesses modus entis as its essence and 'determinata apprehensio' as its secondary or distinctive feature. Siger, as we have already seen, merely stated the essence and the distinctive feature of the pars in question with the result that Siger assigns certain categories which he has derived from

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(1) ~~Thomas of Erfurt, #106: ista accidentia eadem sunt hic, et ibi, et ab iisdem proprietatibus sumuntur.~~

Thomas of Erfurt, #96: ab ista proprietate materiae primae, quae est de se indeterminata, determinabilis tamen per formam sumitur modus significandi essentialis generalissimus 'pronominis'.



Donatus's accidents, e.g. *qualitas* in the *nomen*, to be an accidental mode, whereas Thomas described the same material as a subaltern mode. Donatus stated *qualitas* to be an accident of the *nomen* (1), and divided it into *qualitas propria* which constitutes the proper nouns and *qualitas appellativa* which constitutes all the other substantives and adjectives; Siger describes *qualitas* in the same manner and makes of it an accidental mode, but Thomas on the other hand makes of the division of *propria* and *appellativa* two subaltern modes which can be further divided into the *modi specialissimi* which represent the various substantives and adjectives (2).

Thomas's use of the subaltern mode must not be interpreted as making it a sub-mode; he assigns what Donatus called '*qualitas*' to the subaltern mode since the subaltern mode is used to represent different aspects of the 'pure' essence of the *pars* and may thereby create certain sub-classes of the *pars* in question, i.e. the subaltern modes of the *nomen* are used to express two properties of the essence, e.g. *modus per se stantis* and *modus adiacentis* which constitute the substantive and adjective sub-classes of the *nomen* (3). It does not follow that the subaltern mode will always be used to set up the various sub-classes in the *pars* in question, nor does it follow that an accident taken from Donatus will be in every instance included as a subaltern mode nor will it always create different sub-

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(1) Donatus: *qualitas nominum in quo est? Bipertita est: aut enim unius nomen est et proprium dicitur, aut multorum et appellativum.*

(2) cf. 5.1111, p. 227-38.

(3) cf. 5.111, p. 229.



classes of the pars. Thomas described qualitas in the verb <sup>(1)</sup> as an accidental mode, since it neither created a sub-class of verb nor represented any feature of the essence. Qualitas, which Donatus made into an accident of the pronoun becomes a subaltern mode in Thomas's scheme - but it does not create any sub-class of the pronoun: it does, however, express different features of the essence (i.e. substantia) of the pronoun, and for this reason demonstratio and relatio (Thomas's qualitas) can be used to represent two aspects of the same pronoun. Because the nomen and pronomen possess the same essence, i.e. modus entis, it follows that they will possess the same accidental modes which will be expressions of the same properties, and for this reason Thomas did not describe the accidental modes of the pronomen in any detail but refers to the nomen for an equivalent description of them.

Siger, though not relying as has already been said to the same extent as Thomas on the contrast of matter and form, does nevertheless divide his essential mode in terms of such a contrast, as we have already seen in the nomen <sup>(2)</sup>, i.e. the modus substantiae, the general mode being the material element and qualitas or distincta apprehensio the formal element. The lack of the formal element in the pronoun has an unexpected effect on Siger's presentation <sup>(3)</sup>, in that the pronoun has only one mode of signifying <sup>(4)</sup>, i.e. the general, or we might even call it the

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(1) cf. 5.1211, p. 349.

(2) cf. p. 221-4.

(3) cf. Appendix A.

(4) Siger de Courtrai, p.124: pronomen non habet nisi unum modum significandi qui dictus est (i.e. the general essential mode).



material, but it cannot have a specific mode since it has no form and the specific mode is thus replaced by an indeterminate, unordered mode of signifying substance without quality (1).

Thus we find that Siger's general mode of the pronoun is the same as the general mode of the nomen (2), but the pronomen has however no specific mode; Thomas does not entirely agree, and he seems to have been concerned about the symmetry existing between the declinable partes (3). His *modus generalissimus* of the pronoun states that the pronoun signifies by means of the *modus entis* and *indeterminata apprehensio* (4); the first part of his definition, the material, agrees with the nomen and compares with Siger's statement, but it might be argued that the term *indeterminata apprehensio* was introduced in order to balance the *determinata apprehensio* of the nomen, since it cannot be the formal element of the pronoun in the way that *determinata apprehensio* is the formal element of the nomen.

Thomas explains that *indeterminata apprehensio* is derived from the property of the first matter (5) although it is the unmarked member of the contrast between the *determinata apprehensio* (6), i.e. the formal element of the nomen and the

(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.125: *modus significandi indeterminati, confusi, substantiae mere seu sine qualitate, accidit pronomini, unde pronomen est.*

(2) cf. p. 422.

(3) cf. Diagrams, pp.623-45 in Appendix C, and also in Appendix D, p.664.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #96: *modus significandi essentialis generalissimus pronominis est modus significandi per modum entis et indeterminatae apprehensionis.*

(5) Thomas of Erfurt, #96: *modus indeterminatae apprehensionis oritur a proprietate, seu modo essendi materiae primae.*

(6) The term 'unmarked' is used to suggest that the nomen is 'marked' because it possesses a 'form', but the pronoun is 'unmarked' because it is only 'potentially informable'.



indeterminata apprehensio, i.e. the potentially **informable** element of the pronoun. It seems that Martin of Dacia is quite different on this point, in that he, as Roos points out <sup>(1)</sup>, makes the material component of the nomen the formal component of the pronomen and the formal component of the nomen the material component of the pronomen <sup>(2)</sup>. Thomas insists that the use of indeterminata apprehensio as the distinctive feature of the essence of the pronoun must not be interpreted as absence of form (privatio formae) since this would imply a privative mode, and any mode of signifying must be positive <sup>(3)</sup>; what Thomas is in fact saying is that this facet of the pronoun, by deriving from first matter which is innate and immanent <sup>(4)</sup>, merely implies that the pronoun possesses the same essence as the nomen which constitutes a common mode of signifying <sup>(5)</sup>, that the first matter of the pronoun is informable, i.e. capable of acquiring form, and that it will be informed by means of the nomen. The pronoun thus signifies substance without quality <sup>(6)</sup>, i.e. it consists of matter and potential form.

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(1) H. Roos, Op.cit., p.147.

(2) Martin of Dacia: quod materiale est nominis est formale pronominis tamen complexivum.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #97: illud quod est ita indeterminatum, quod excludat formam, et formae determinationem, est privativum.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #96: materia prima in se, extra indeterminata est, respectu cuiuslibet formae naturalis, quae inest de se, ita quod nec includit nec excludit formam, nec determinationem formae.

(5) Thomas of Erfurt, #97: per modum istum privativum grammatici circumloquuntur modum significandi positivum, qui est modum significandi communis simpliciter.

(6) Thomas of Erfurt, #96: pronomen significare substantiam meram vel substantiam sine qualitate.



Modus significandi subalternus.

We have seen in the nomen (1) and verbum (2) that Thomas alone of the Modistae, uses the subaltern mode and its further division of modus specialissimus to express and describe in morpho-semantic terms the various types of word which the Modistae considered to be members of a particular word-class.

In the nomen, the second feature of its essential mode, i.e. determinata apprehensio, is derived from the property of qualitas and represents the formal element in contrast to the material element of the nomen (3), i.e. the modus entis; this distinguishes the nomen from the pronomen, but its counterpart is not the formal element of the pronoun nor does it represent qualitas, since by definition the pronoun does not possess qualitas as a feature of its essence as a result of not possessing form. In the nomen, Thomas had interpreted Donatus's qualitas divided into appellativa and propria, as aspects of the subaltern mode of the nomen which created the first and basic division in the inventory of the nomen, i.e. nomen commune and nomen proprium. In the pronoun, Thomas interpreted Donatus's <sup>qualitas</sup> divided into finita and infinita as demonstratio and relatio, and described them as subaltern modes. However, the pronoun, as we have just said, does not have by definition qualitas or form (though it is informable) so that, whereas in the nomen the determinata apprehensio which is derived from form and quality is responsible for the creation of the basic division

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(1) cf. p. 226-36.

(2) cf. p. 330-8.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #25: per qualitatem, modum qualitatis, qui est modus determinatae apprehensionis, sumptus a proprietate formae et qualitatis, qui est modus determinationis.



of nomen commune and nomen proprium, the indeterminata apprehensio, which is the second feature of the essential mode of the pronoun, cannot create a basic division in the type of pronoun, and instead becomes different aspects of the pronoun potentially present in every pronoun, just as first matter is potential in every form (1); thus indeterminata apprehensio, which Thomas tells us, is derived from the property of first matter, is potentially present in every pronoun, and we shall see that this is so as a result of demonstratio and relatio.

Thomas divides the subaltern modes into three groups, i.e. demonstratio and relatio, primitive and derivative, substantivum and adiectivum, but it does not seem that all these subaltern modes should be treated as equal; this is not every astonishing since in the nomen we saw that certain subaltern modes took 'precedence' over the others (2), i.e. we found the division of modus communis and modus appropriatus in a position of priority, and the modus communis was divided into modus per se stantis and modus adiacentis, which were then divided into their modi specialissimi. This pattern can be applied to the subaltern mode of the pronoun; the contrast of proprium and commune is not possible since the pronoun does not possess qualitas, but in its place we have the contrast of demonstratio/relatio (3) which,

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.125: materia prima non determinat sibi aliquam formam, sed est in potentia ad omnem formam.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #27: sunt duo modi significandi, qui immediate sub hoc modo continentur, scilicet modus communis, et modus appropriatus; qui sunt modi speciales respectu generalissimi, et sunt generales respectu aliorum modorum.

(3) cf. ~~ibid.~~ p. 423-4: 427.



although they are potential in every pronomen, do not however create different types of pronoun. The fundamental division in the subaltern mode seems to be substantivum - adiectivum and demonstratio and relatio are always potential in these pronoun; every pronomen adiectivum can also be a primitive or have a derivative and these too can constitute different types of pronoun (1); the following diagram attempts to set out the relationships established within the subaltern mode:

Pronomen					
Substantivum			Adiectivum		
D	R		D	R	
			p	d	p d

D = Demonstratio

R = Relatio

p = primitivum

d = derivativum

The modus per se stantis and the modus adiacentis in the pronoun derive from the same properties as in the nomen (2). There are three substantive pronouns, e.g. ego, tu, sui, which, possessing demonstratio or relatio, are used without the help of any other substantive (3), what would be stated in modern

- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #102: primitio et derivatio constituunt diversas species in pronomine, scilicet pronomen primitivum, et derivativum.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #103: modus adiacentis et per se stantis ab eisdem proprietatibus sumitur, a quibus sumebatur in nomine, scilicet modus per se stantis a proprietate essentiae distinctae et modus adiacentis a proprietate inhaerentis alteri secundum esse.
- 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #103: a grammaticis ponuntur tria pronomina substantiva, scilicet, ego, tu, sui, quia huiusmodi usi sunt poetae virtute demonstrationis et relationis in sermone perfecto, sine adiunctione alterius substantivi.



terms as "independent substitutes requiring no antecedent utterance of the replaced form" (1). All other pronouns are adiectiva, since they can be used adjectivally, i.e. by means of the modus adiacentis (2), and all are potentially demonstrative or relative.

The primitive and derivative modes of signifying which constitute the pronomen primitivum and the pronomen derivativum, are derived from the same properties as species primitiva and species derivativa, the accidental mode of the nomen (3). Thomas does not specify his reasons for making this rather radical change in organisation, nor does he illustrate - which would facilitate considerably our understanding the change. The reason seems to be however that in the nomen, primitiva and derivativa represented modifications only of the species of the nomen, whereas in the pronoun they represent different types of pronoun (4). The pronoun "ego" is described as a pronomen substantivum but its derived form "meus" would be a pronomen adiectivum derivativum, and a change, such as this, between the modus subalternus and the modus specialissimus of the pronomen serves to create a different kind of pronoun; by means

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(1) L. Bloomfield, Language, p.255.

(2) Thomas of Erfurt, #103: aliis usi sunt adiective; ideo grammatici omnia alia pronomina adiectiva posuerunt.

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #102: modus significandi, qui est primitivus, et derivativus, sumitur ab eadem proprietate in pronomine, a quo sumitur species primitiva et derivativa in nomine...in nomine, species primitiva et derivativa modi significandi accidentales nominis nominantur.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, #102: primitio in pronomine idem est quod species primitiva in nomine, et derivatio in pronomine idem est quod species derivativa in nomine. Sed habent se differenter, quia primitio et derivatio constituunt diversas species in pronomine, scilicet pronomen primitivum, et derivativum.



of 'species' therefore it becomes possible to create sub-classes of the pronoun. This distinction is especially necessary, since otherwise there would be no means, in view of the absence of *qualitas*, of creating different types of pronoun, except by means of the *substantivum* - *adiectivum* contrast (1).

As we have already stated, *demonstratio* expresses the property of certainty and presence, while *relatio* expresses the property of uncertainty and absence (2); *demonstratio*, which Donatus called *qualitas finita*, constitutes the *pronomen demonstrativum*, and *relatio*, which Donatus called *qualitas infinita*, constitutes the *pronomen relativum* (3). It must be repeated that these are not the equivalent of the demonstrative and relative pronoun - indeed the *Modistae*, like Priscian before them, excluded what would have been called today the relative pronoun altogether from their inventory of the pronoun. There are, of course, different degrees of *demonstratio* and *relatio*, e.g. the pronoun 'ego' represents the property of *demonstratio* to the greatest possible degree, the

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1) cf. diagram, p. 643.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #106: *per qualitatem finitam dat intelligere demonstrationem quae rem finitam et certam significat et repraesentat, scilicet sub accidentibus realibus, quae oculis conspici possunt. Per qualitatem infinitam dat intelligere relationem, quae rem incertam et infinitam repraesentat, scilicet sub notitia secunda per recordationem, quae est incerta respectu notitiae primae.*

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #100-1: *pronomen demonstrativum significat rem sub ratione vel proprietate praesentiae seu notitiae primae ...pronomen relativum significat rem sub proprietate absentiae, et incertitudinis, seu notitiae secundae.*



pronoun 'tu' to a lesser degree, and so forth <sup>(1)</sup>; this is pure semanticisation of the degree of subjectivity and objectivity in the pronoun <sup>(2)</sup>.

Of the subaltern modes of the pronoun, only the pronomen adiectivum derivativum divides further into modi specialissimi, of which it has two; the first one signifies possession, and thus becomes a possessive pronoun, a type which traditional grammars describe as pronominal adjectives; it signifies the mode of connection by means of the mode of possession, e.g. meus, tuus, suus <sup>(3)</sup>. The other modus specialissimus is the pronomen derivativum gentile, and it signifies the mode of connection but by means of the mode of gentility of heredity, e.g. nostras, vestras <sup>(4)</sup>. Once more we have a formal description of certain Latin pronouns restated in semantic terms, a very typical Modistic method.

The structure of the essential mode of signifying of the pronoun can be expressed by means of these sequences:

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- (1) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~A~~100: contingit rem esse praesentem et certam et maxime certam vel praesentem, et sic demonstratur per hoc pronomen ego; vel non maxime esse certam et praesentem, et sic demonstratur per hoc pronomen tu, et alia similia.
  - (2) This can be compared to the very rich types of demonstration found, for example, in certain Amerindian languages, which often express the presence or absence of the object under discussion by means of a demonstrative device.
  - (3) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~A~~104: pronomen derivativum possessivum est, quod significat per modum adiacentis alteri per modum possidentis ipsum, ut meus, tuus, suus.
  - (4) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~A~~104: pronomen derivativum gentile, est, quod significat per modum adiacentis alteri, sub ratione gentis, vel patriae, ut nostras, vestras.

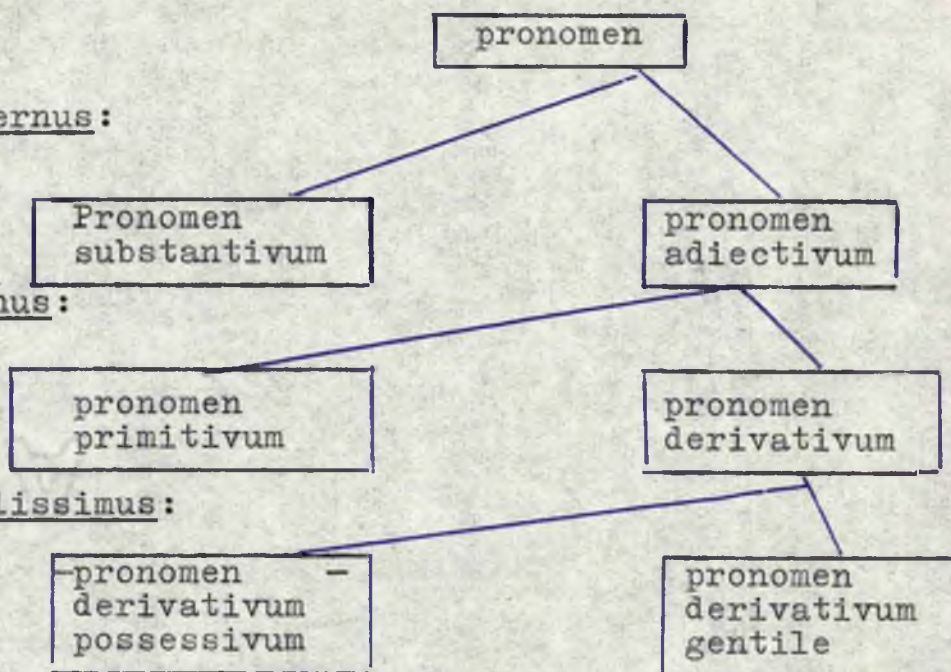


modus generalissimus:

modus subalternus:

modus subalternus:

modus specialissimus:



#### 5.1141 Modus significandi accidentalis

We have to rely entirely on Thomas for our knowledge of Modistic theory of the accidental modes of the pronoun; Siger's treatment of the pronoun breaks off abruptly when he completes his examination of the essential modes of the pronoun (1).

Donatus ascribed six accidents to the pronoun, i.e. qualitas, genus, numerus, figura, persona and casus; once more it must be pointed out that the term 'accidentia' as used by the classical grammarians and accidental mode as used by the Modistae are by no means always the same, although they do often

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(1) Siger does say something of the indeclinable partes in his Sophisma "O Magister", i.e. he describes their essential modes, but this cannot be said to complete his treatise.



coincide. We had cause to refer to this (1) when discussing qualitas in the nomen and verbum, when it was shown that, for internal considerations, qualitas became a feature of the essence of the nomen, but an accidental mode of the verbum. In the pronoun as has already been pointed out (2), qualitas cannot, except negatively, be a feature of the essential mode, and therefore Thomas does not follow Donatus in this - in the nomen, qualitas and its divisions create different types of nomen, and are therefore included as subaltern modes (3), but in the pronoun, demonstratio and relatio (which Donatus called qualitas finita and infinita) create different aspects of the pronoun.

The other accidental modes which belong to the pronoun are genus, numerus, persona, figura and casus, and whatever was said of these categories in the nomen applies to them as accidental modes of the pronoun (4). This reaffirms the intimacy between the nomen and the pronomen, which has been observed already in their essential modes.

Donatus had included qualitas as one of the accidents of the pronoun, but Priscian did not include demonstratio and relatio among the accidents of the pronoun - indeed Priscian, as has been stated already (5), excludes qualitas altogether from his definition of the pronoun but does include demonstratio and relatio (6) in his

(1) cf. pp.226-31: 349-50.

(2) cf. p. 411.

(3) cf. p. 232.

(4) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~106~~: de genere, et numero, persona, figura, et casu in pronomine idem intelligatur, quod de ipsis dictum est de nomine.

(5) cf. p. 413.

(6) Donatus has been criticised for including qualitas as an accident of the pronoun.



description as aspects of the substance (substantia) (1), a characteristic attribute of the pronoun. Peter Helias and other grammarians of the 13th century had discussed this and had concluded that demonstratio and relatio are substantial features, i.e. properties of the pronoun and cannot be an accident since they refer to part of the definition of the pronoun - though Peter states it differently, i.e. that accidents refer to the inflections of the declinable partes (2).

Much of this problem is a question of organisation and rests on the difference between accident and the accidental mode of the Modistae; an accident was a consequential attribute derived from the morphological characteristics of the pars in question in contrast to a property peculiar to the pars in question and which forms part of its definition (3). An accidental mode in the Modistic scheme contrasts to an essential mode and must be considered, therefore, as external, i.e. a feature which the pars acquires to express the variations which occur to their essence but originate from without their essence (4). An accident was,

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- (1) Priscian (XVII,73): pronomen unum pro omnibus accipitur nominibus, id est quod demonstrationem vel relationem habet alicuius certae substantiae.
- (2) Peter Helias: demonstratio, relatio, discretio pronomini sunt quasi substantialia quoniam propter demonstrationem vel relationem nec non etiam discretionem reperta sunt. Licet tamen auctor dicat hec omnia pronomini accidere, ideo quod principaliter significat substantiam, secundo illa. Vel fortasse illa sola dicuntur declinabilium accidentia quae ad aliquam eorum pertinet inflexionem.
- (3) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p. 105.
- (4) Thomas of Erfurt, #20: modus significandi accidentalis est, qui advenit parti post eius esse completum, non dans esse simpliciter parti, nec secundum genus, nec secundum speciem.



therefore, for the classical grammarian, a formal term of reference, whereas the accidental mode is something which is, according to their professed belief, semantic and contains formal criteria only incidentally, but is however based on morphological criteria.

It becomes clear that demonstratio and relatio, since they represent aspects of the substance (substantia), an essential feature of the pronoun, cannot be included as an accidental mode, but since they do not represent the essence of the pars in question, they cannot be the modus generalissimus; they become a subaltern mode, not because they represent different types of pronoun, but because they represent different aspects of the essence of the pronoun and are yet capable of further refinement to the modus specialissimus.

The analysis of qualitas, and its inclusion by Donatus as an accident of the pronoun and its exclusion by the Modistae from the accidental modes of the pronoun, show more clearly the closeness of the relationship between the nomen and the pronomen in terms of the essence they share and the accidental modes which they also share and which are variations of this same essence.



### 5.12. The indeclinable partes orationis

Prior to the Modistae, mediaeval grammarians had little new to add to the definitions of the indeclinable partes orationis, and they, including Peter Helias, had been content to follow Priscian and Donatus. The Modistae too followed their predecessors, but did however make certain innovations in their general treatment of the indeclinable partes and their position in the grammatical hierarchy, and also in their definitions of the individual ~~of the~~ indeclinable partes.

One of the most serious flaws in the grammatical theories of Greece and Rome and also in the Middle Ages was the treatment of the indeclinable partes orationis; during this period in the history of grammar the indeclinables created a greater problem in grammatical description than their position in the hierarchy seemed to warrant, with the result that they were always considered as inferior members of the word-classes used in grammatical description. Such an attitude is, of course, inevitable in any system of grammatical description which relies for its criteria on logical or metaphysical factors, and one can almost imagine the dilemma that the Modistae must have found themselves in, i.e. having defined the declinable partes in terms of 'ens' or 'esse' which are very closely related, how could they define the indefinable partes in similar terms. What is the substance (substantia) or the becoming (fieri) represented by these indeclinable partes? It becomes therefore inevitable that the Modistae, like their classical predecessors, should



have to resort to other means in order to define the indefinable<sup>d</sup> partes; it will be remembered that Aristotle had dismissed them from the category of word (1), and the Modistae dismissed them also as not belonging to language (2).

Lest we should condemn our classical and mediaeval forebears too harshly, it must also be pointed out that a similar treatment of the indeclinables can be found among modern grammarians (3), who have classified them by means of non-linguistic criteria, and have come to a similar conclusion, which is manifestly improper, since it is impossible to disregard a large proportion of the lexicon of a language simply because it does not fit into categories established according to 'a priori' and non-linguistic principles (4).

The very existence of the indeclinable partes, requiring grammatical explanation, stresses the necessity for formal, intralinguistic explanation, since logical, metaphysical and philosophical means are manifestly incapable of explaining their

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- 1) R.L. Robins, A. & M., p.85: One Modista..., finding these unflected parts of speech to fall outside the philosophical theory of language as it was then conceived, declared that such words 'did not belong to language as such', and were mere auxiliaries. This reminds us of Aristotle's similar rejection of 'syndesmoi' or 'grammatical words' as not words in the proper sense; and Aristotle was a thinker who... approached grammar from philosophical or logical assumptions.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.144: sunt magis de bene esse orationis quam de esse.
  - 3) cf. H. Sweet, L. Tesnière, et al.
  - 4) R.L. Robins, A. & M., p.86: to say that such words are outside language is to ignore one of the most important parts of the structure of language, and to neglect just those words that are the prime concern of the grammarian.



presence and function in grammar (1).

Why should they, in fact, present any problem at all? An explanation would seem to be connected with Aristotle's argument about the hierarchy of perfection which implies a commensurate hierarchy of operation, i.e. the greater the perfection, the higher the operation and a similar hierarchy was thus imposed on the partes orationis (2); Aristotelian theory and mediaeval metaphysics resulted in the application of a hierarchy of properties to the partes orationis, and hence the indeclinable partes, by their very nature, cannot possess the same area of meaning or the same number of modes of meaning as the declinable partes because they derive from fewer properties than do the declinable partes (3).

In order to appreciate the problem that the Modistae faced - (though it was entirely of their own creation by basing their grammatical classification on metaphysical criteria) - in setting up the indeclinable partes, we have to consider their whole conception of the 'word' in the form of partes orationis

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- (1) R.H. Robins, A.&M., p.86: This should reinforce the principle that grammatical science must as far as possible be based on intra-linguistic or formal methods of analysis and statement.
- (2) G. Wallerand, Op.cit., p.(55): D'après Aristote et son commentateur par excellence, une forme plus noble, d'une perfection plus grande, implique des opérations plus élevées et plus nombreuses... Il en est de même dans les parties du discours. Les syncategoreumata ne peuvent avoir que des modalités rudimentaires parce que l'amplitude de leur signification est notablement inférieure à celle des parties déclinales.
- (3) Thomas of Erfurt, 183: Interiectiones et aliae partes indeclinabiles, non tot modos significandi habent, quot partes declinabiles, quia significatum partium indeclinabilium paucis subsistit proprietatibus, sed significatio partium declinabilium multis; ideo pauciores sunt modi significandi partibus indeclinabilibus quam declinabilibus.



which, in turn, are closely associated to the metaphysics of substance, matter, and form, to which reference has constantly been made (1).

A mode of signifying, as we saw in an earlier chapter (2), is the means of expressing a mental concept, and a *pars orationis* has its status by means of the modes of signifying. The mental concept derives its importance from the importance of the object under consideration, i.e. from the properties of the thing itself, and as a consequence, the relative importance of the modes of signifying derives from the relative importance of the thing they are used to express or signify. What suggests itself to one's mind first and foremost is 'ens' and its properties and by extension 'esse' and its properties (3); ens and esse must, however, be interpreted in the largest sense of the word as representative of the properties of the external world, i.e. as made up of things that are and which must be before they can act. This is closely connected with and derives from the moderate realism of the Modistae (4); moderate realism held that the

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(1) cf. p.44-7: 71-6.

(2) cf. p. 169.

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.144: *illud quod principaliter et primo occurrit intellectui nostro est ipsum ens et proprietates eius...videlicet proprietates entis ut est ens et quiescens, magis extendendo ens ad esse genus entis sive in anima sive extra animam et proprietates ipsius esse et motus magis extendendo ipsum esse ad ipsum modum motus, sive proprie sive improprie dicti, propter quod modi significandi sumpti ab iis proprietatibus sunt magis principales et per consequens partes orationis constitutae per istos modos significandi sunt magis principales.*

(4) cf. pp. 41-4.



universal has no existence apart from the individual things in which it is realised (1), but the mind has the ability to abstract the universal from the individual in which it is realised, and it is thus possible to consider the universals apart from the individual sensible things in which they were realised; this means that the more 'real' a concept is, i.e. the more 'substantial' the object to which it refers is, the greater its importance and therefore the more important is the mode of signifying which is used to signify it. The result is that the modes of signifying that derive from them are more important, and the partes orationis that exhibit them are similarly more important, than the other partes which derive from modes of signifying which do not signify any essence which can be recognised as an 'ens' or its 'esse'; hence the pre-eminence that the declinable partes, which do express 'ens' and 'esse', enjoy and as a result constitute the principle partes orationis, while the indeclinable partes, since they do not express ens or esse, derive from fewer and less important properties (2) and since they can hardly be said to derive from or to constitute any aspect of reality, they cannot possess those accidents which characterise the declinable partes and without which they cannot be declined.

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1) S. J. Curtis, A Short History of Western Philosophy in the Middle Ages, pp.49-50.

2) Siger de Courtrai, p.144: *aliae partes orationis sunt minus principales quia modi significandi ipsarum sumuntur a proprietatibus minus principalibus.*



It is to the great credit of the Modistae that they attempted to make much more of the indeclinables than their predecessors had done. They did this in two ways, at least - by disagreeing with and restating, for instance, the definition of the preposition<sup>(1)</sup>, but more particularly by the greater prominence they gave to the indeclinable partes as such. Thrax has been criticised for not making more of the binary contrast between the declinables and indeclinables<sup>(2)</sup>; it would be not only unjust but incorrect to accuse the Modistae, especially Siger, of similarly ignoring this distinction, because Siger particularly does make much of the contrast, and in his Sophisma "O Magister" in which he deals with the indeclinables, he discusses at some length the difference between them and the declinable partes. Thomas is perhaps less detailed in his discussion of this aspect of the declinable-indeclinable opposition, but as we have seen before<sup>(3)</sup>, he is much less concerned with the theory of the indeclinables<sup>(4)</sup> and dwells at greater length on the actual indeclinable partes of the

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(1) cf. p. 484-9.

(2) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.96 (n.3.)

(3) cf. p. 206.

(4) Thomas has much less to say about the indeclinable partes than Siger; indeed, all that Thomas has to say about the indeclinables as a group can be found at the end of the section 'Etymologia', i.e. the section in which he describes the partes orationis. All that Thomas has to say about the indeclinables is that they have fewer modes of signifying than the declinable partes because their meanings subsist on fewer properties than the meanings of the indeclinable partes; cf. Thomas of Erfurt, 183: significatum partium indeclinabilium paucis subsistit proprietatibus, sed significatio partium declinabilium multis: ideo pauciores sunt modi significandi partibus indeclinabilibus, quam declinabilibus.



Latin language and their various modes of signifying. Both of them, however, clearly suggest to us today, though obviously not using this terminology, a binary opposition between declinable and indeclinable partes orationis (1).

The Modistae then make a definite distinction between the declinables and indeclinables, and, as is to be expected, give the primacy to the declinables (2); this is inevitable in terms of their analytical procedure. The declinables, as we saw (3), were kept discrete from the indeclinables on the grounds that the declinable partes derive from many more properties than the indeclinables. There is no need to dwell at this stage on the metaphysical factors (4) which lie behind the establishment of the declinable partes, which Siger classified as 'magis principales', except to say that they are derived by virtue of the fact that they signify ens or esse, and it is difficult to imagine what metaphysical essence could be expressed by the indeclinable partes. By a curious quirk, therefore, the Modistae were compelled to describe the indeclinable partes, rather than exclude them (which a metaphysician might well have done), in much more formal terms (5). This problem of the indeclinables often left the Modistae in something of a cleft stick because, for instance, we find Siger at one stage saying

1) cf. p. 439: 442: 445-9.

2) Siger de Courtrai, p. 144: modi significandi sumpti ab iis proprietatibus sunt magis principales et per consequens partes orationis constitutae per istos modos significandi sunt magis principales.

3) cf. p. 212.

4) cf. p. 197-9: 218: 310-16: 437-41.

5) Siger de Courtrai, p. 153: partes indeclinabiles trahunt sua significata ab adiunctis, dicendum quod habent significata et modos significandi secundum se licet varientur secundum adiuncta, quod convenit, quia omnes per modum disponentis significant et dispositio variatur secundum variationem disponibilis.



something very reminiscent of Aristotle and tantamount to a denial of their grammatical status <sup>(1)</sup>, and then at another stage insisting that the indeclinable partes must be described in terms of a general and specific essential mode, just like the declinable partes, for the very reason that they are partes orationis <sup>(2)</sup>, albeit 'minus principales'. Little, however, will be achieved at this stage by dwelling on the inadequacies of the Modistae, and it becomes possible to say that by combining Siger and Thomas we can produce a fairly definitive idea of the Modistic conception of the indeclinables as a group and of the partes which make up this group.

The Modistae were agreed on the 'inferior' status of the indeclinable partes, but did not agree on the methods of describing them: Michel explicitly and Thomas implicitly argue that these partes have only one essential mode of signifying <sup>(3)</sup> which constitutes in fact its specific difference, which Siger emphatically denies <sup>(4)</sup>.

A slight digression becomes necessary at this point in order to understand this: Michel de Marbais divides his essential mode

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- (1) Siger de Courtrai, p.144L sunt magis de bene esse orationis quam de esse.
  - (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.145: omnes partes tam declinabiles quam indeclinabiles debent habere duos modos significandi essentialis, integrantes essentiam speciei illius partis.
  - (3) Michel de Marbais: cuilibet parti indeclinabili inest unus solus modus significandi essentialis, qui est sicut differentia specifica.
  - (4) Siger de Courtrai, p.143: ad essentiam alicuius speciei consideratae a logico non sufficit natura generis, immo requiritur natura speciei, ergo similiter ad essentiam speciei grammaticalis non sufficit modus significandi generalis, immo requiritur specificus.



into two, like Siger's dual modes of general and specific, and Thomas divided his *modus generalissimus* at least in the declinable partes, into a dual statement, which combines a definition of the pars in question and a statement about the essence it shares with another declinable pars (1). The declinable partes share either 'ens' or 'esse' which is incorporated into Thomas's first statement, but since the indeclinables have no 'ens' or 'esse' to share, there becomes no need for a first statement, which will account for Michel's statement and Thomas's organisation. This, as has already been stated, is denied by Siger, and this represents one of his most important achievements; he has admitted that the indeclinables do not have the same grammatical status as the declinable partes, but they are partes orationis and therefore they must have the two essential modes just like the other partes (2). He cannot introduce metaphysical criteria, and so he makes a general statement, which is in fact much more grammatical, i.e. much nearer to modern grammar than the statements made about the general essential modes of the declinable partes, i.e. that the indeclinable partes signify by means of the *modus disponentis*, i.e. by means of their general syntactic relationship with other words; this is the general essential mode which all the indeclinable

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- (1) e.g. Thomas's *modus generalissimus* of the *nomen*, i.e. *per modum entis* which it shares with the *pronomina* and *determinatae apprehensionis* which separates it from the *pronomina*.
- (2) Siger de Courtrai, p.145: *omnes partes indeclinabiles habent duos modos significandi essentialis quorum unus est generalis, alter specificus, sicut inducendo patebit secundum similitudinem quam in nomine reperimus.*



partes share. We have had reason to refer (1) to the idea of 'archipars' in Siger's analyses of the partes orationis and this is reinforced by his description of the indeclinable partes: it would seem then that the partes orationis can be classified according to Siger's analysis, into a tertiary opposition consisting of two marked archipartes and one unmarked, i.e. we have two archipartes marked by 'ens' or 'esse' and the third unmarked in the sense that it possesses neither 'ens' nor 'esse'. Siger then describes the indeclinable partes in terms of their specific modes which, as in the declinable partes, constitute their specific differences and render each one discrete from all the other partes; we shall see that in these specific modes Siger is very close to Thomas in his definition of the individual indeclinable partes (2).

Siger's *modus generalis* is of great importance to him in that he recognises that certain features belonging to one species may well be found in another species, such as animal and man (3); the general mode is used by Siger to express this overlap, and so far as the indeclinable partes are concerned, the overlap consists in the recognition that they have their

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(1) cf. p. 141.

(2) e.g. *praepositio*: Siger de Courtrai, p.151: *modus specificus est modus significandi per modum retorquentis casuale ad actum.*  
 Thomas of Erfurt, #176: *modus significandi essentialis generalissimus praepositionis est modus significandi per modum adiacentis alteri casuali ipsum contrahens, et ad actum retorquens.*

(3) Siger de Courtrai, p.145: *sicut in diffinitione alicuius speciei consideratae a logico semper ponitur aliquid quod habet rationem generis in alia specie reperitur, sicut animal in diffinitione hominis.*



raison d'être only by reason of their syntactical functions. Similarly, Siger sets up his specific mode, since he recognizes that a species possesses a feature or features which distinguish it from all the others, e.g. rationality in man <sup>(1)</sup>, and so in the indeclinable partes, each pars is discrete from the others by reason of a syntactic function which is different from the others.

There is another possible explanation for Thomas's change in analytical procedure: in the declinable partes, his modus generalissimus, as we have stated, was made up of two statements, which constituted the contrast of the matter and form <sup>(2)</sup>, and which created the contrast between the declinable partes, i.e. the nomen and pronomen possess the same matter, but they differ in that the nomen possesses a discrete form while the pronomen is merely informable. Such a 'substantial' approach to the indeclinable partes is clearly impossible: it is as though Thomas recognised that this was impossible, and has therefore had recourse to the more traditional syntactic method of analysis.

We find, therefore, that in this case, Thomas's modus generalissimus is to all intents and purposes indentical to Siger's modus specificus, and Siger's modus generalis is used, since, as we have already stated <sup>(3)</sup> <sup>he</sup> he did not make much use of the matter/form contrast, to make a general statement about the

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.145: ideo ponitur aliquid quod habet rationem specificae differentiae quod speciem constituit et illam ab aliis distinguit, sicut rationale in diffinitione, hominis.

(2) cf. p. 222-3: 328.

(3) cf. p. 323.



similar grammatical function of the indeclinable partes; this acts almost as a justification for their inclusion in his grammatical inventory. Such a justification may well have been forced upon him in view of the argument put forward by the Modistae that the meaning of the indeclinable partes, without the addition of the principal or declinable partes, is confused since they do not indicate any definite concept of the mind, but such confusion and indefiniteness disappears when in conjunction with the other declinable partes (1).

It would be quite wrong, however, as Michel points out (2), to imagine that the indeclinable partes signify nothing without the addition of the declinable partes, for, as Michel says (3), some partes do not acquire their meaning from their adjuncts but possess their meaning before any construction is imposed on them. This is a very important statement, for it is attributing to the indeclinable partes a much more vital position in linguistic hierarchy than had previously been given to them; what Michel is implying, is that if we interpret, as indeed we must, the modes of signifying to be mainly the semanticisation of the grammatical categories, we must accordingly treat the indeclinable partes and analyse them in a similar manner to the analysis of the declinable

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- (1) Michel de Marbais; ipse per se sumpte significatum habent confusum sine partium aliarum adiunctione, ita quod non significant aliquem mentis conceptum certum sive finitum. Cum partibus declinabilibus aliquod significatum finitum significantibus adiunguntur, earum confusum significatum finitatur, ita quod ipsarum incertitudo vel confusio ab eis iam removetur (quoted by Thurot, p.188).
- (2) Michel de Marbais: plurimum peccant nostri gramatici dicentes quod ipse partes indeclinabiles per se sumpte nihil significant sine adiunctione declinabilium. (Quoted by Thurot, p.188).
- (3) Michel de Marbais: non enim aliquae partes suum significatum recipiunt ex adiunctis, sed ipsum habent ante omnem constructionem voluntate impositoris. (Quoted by Thurot, p.188).



partes, since the indeclinables too will therefore have their modes of signifying, and that we cannot merely discard them as grammatical words. Regardless of any criticism which may be made of a system of grammatical analysis which uses meaning as its principal criterion, it must be appreciated that by attaching a separate meaning to an indeclinable pars considerably enhances its position among the partes orationis.

We find then that the loss of the matter/form contrast compelled the Modistae to resort to formal criteria in their description of the indeclinables, and since their morpho-semantics is equally impossible, the Modistae used formal syntactic criteria to establish their indeclinable partes. This was also necessary since the partes orationis were conceived for the expression of mental concepts by means of 'sermo congruus', and even if the indeclinable partes may not belong to language as such, they are nevertheless often required in order to make the expression of a concept possible <sup>(1)</sup>; the indeclinables are used, therefore, to render language more adequate <sup>(2)</sup>, and to do this they receive a vague signification, i.e. that of signifying by means of the modus disponentis, i.e. they are less easy to gloss in a dictionary.

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(1) Siger de Courtrai, p.145: multi sunt conceptus qui nullo modo experimerentur per sermonem congruum nisi essent partes indeclinabiles.

(2) G. Wallerand, Op.cit. p.(49): Quant aux parties indéclinables, elles ne sont pas de l'essence du langage, elles ne servent qu'à rendre celui-ci plus adéquat: "non sunt de esse orationis sed de bene esse"; elles reçoivent une signification vague que les grammairiens appellent: "per modum disponentis alterum".



5.121 Adverbium

The Greek <sup>(1)</sup> and Roman <sup>(2)</sup> grammarians had defined the adverb very narrowly as being associated grammatically with the verb and said nothing about its possible associations with other partes orationis, i.e. adjective or another <sup>ad</sup>verb <sup>(3)</sup>. One important advance of the Latin grammarians had been the separation of the interjection from the adverb which had been included as a sub-class of the adverb by the Greeks. The Modistae, as is to be expected, followed their classical predecessors very closely; it must be remembered that Modistic grammar is largely a re-statement in semantic terms of Priscian's and Donatus's grammar and therefore we must expect that they will follow Priscian and Donatus closely in subject matter, if not in grammatical doctrine.

The treatment by the Modistae of the adverb and the other indeclinable partes provides an interesting study in contrasting styles and theoretical attitudes. As far as subject matter is concerned, the Modistae are to all intents agreed on the nature of the adverb, but it is the organisation of their material which is the most interesting aspect of their work. Thomas and Michel take largely the attitude that there are four separate indeclinable partes orationis which put them on a par with the four declinable partes: Siger on the other hand groups them together by means of their general essential mode making of them a group very reminiscent of the 'particles' of the modern

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- (1) R.H. Robins, A.&M., p.40: "the adverb is a part of speech without case-inflection, further specifying the verb".  
 (2) Priscian: adverbium est pars orationis indeclinabilis, cuius significatio verbis adicitur.  
 (3) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.101.



modern grammarian (1), so that we have nominals (made up of substantives, adjectives and pronouns), verbals (made up of verbs and participles) and disponibles (2) (made up of adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections).

Thomas devotes more time and space to a description, which is almost exhaustive, of the adverb than of any other pars with the exception of the nomen; this fact, moreover, plus the fact that Thomas includes the adverb, which he defines in syntactic terms (3) immediately after the verb and prior to the participle, suggests a morphological link between the nominals but a syntactic association with the verb, which would in fact make a very formal statement of the adverb, except that the Modistae do not deliberately use formal criteria. It is possible to see in this a direct link with the Greek grammarians who, as Lersch explained (4) considered the adverb as morphologically associated with the nominals but syntactically with the verbs. It does, however, show up a certain inconsistency in Thomas which is not found in Siger, certainly as far as the essential modes are concerned; whereas Siger seems content to state the theory of

(1) O. Jespersen, The Philosophy of Grammar, p.87.

(2) C.F. Hockett, A Course in Modern Linguistics, p.222.

(2) Siger de Courtrai, p.146: *modus significandi generalis adverbii est significare per modum disponentis et dicitur generalis quia reperitur in aliis speciebus orationis, videlicet in praepositione et quibusdam aliis.*

(3) Thomas of Erfurt, #150: *adverbium est pars orationis, significans per modum adiacentis alteri quod per modum esse significat ipsum esse absolute determinans.*

(4) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.102.



the essential mode without any particular language in mind, Thomas tends to reinforce his statement by means of a more exhaustive description of the pars in question (1) as exemplified in Latin. Siger, by his use of the general essential modes to demonstrate certain fundamental grammatical functions which distinguish in effect three types of groups of partes orationis, is much more 'modern' than the other Modistae who are, as their treatment of the indeclinable partes shows, much more traditional in their grammatical theory.

The adverb, for the Modistae, is an indeclinable pars which signifies by means of the mode of determining or being attached to something which signifies by means of the mode of becoming (2): as was pointed out in the introductory section on the indeclinable partes (3), Thomas's modus generalissimus expresses the same doctrine as Siger's specific mode, his general mode having been used to describe its status as a member of its 'archipars'. The adverb is thus an indeclinable pars which determines a verb or participle, since they signify by means of the modus fieri, a narrow definition which quite clearly is derived from Priscian.

How is it that there should be such a close connection between

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- 1) By means of his analysis of the modus subalternus and the modus specialissimus. This is shown in more detail on p.458-66 when Thomas discusses the modus subalternus and specialissimus of the adverb.
  - 2) Michel de Marbais: adverbium est pars orationis significans per modum fluxus vel fieri in alio.
  - 3) cf. p.447.



the adverb and the verb? This goes back, in reality, to Priscian (1) and the Greeks who talked about the adjectivality of the adverb with regard to the verb; the Modistae developed this by arguing, as Michel de Marbais does (2), that the mode of substance is divided into the mode of substance in itself by means of which the nomen substantivum signifies and the mode of substance in something else, by means of which the nomen adiectivum signifies, and it will be remembered that the nomen adiectivum derives its essence from the nomen substantivum (3): similarly the mode of becoming is divided into something which becomes by itself and something which becomes in something else (4). The adverb and the adjective have this in common that they derive their being by their power to associate with the pars which gives them their being.

Thrax has been criticised for saying nothing about the possible associations of the adverb with other partes orationis (5); the Modistae touch very tentatively on this subject and come to the conclusion that certain adverbs can construct endocentrically with other partes than the verb or participle. However the tentative nature of this new development must be stressed: Siger says very little about it at all, and Michel insists that the

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- 1) Priscian: adverbium vero quod verbi est vi adiectivum...
  - 2) Michel de Marbais: modus significandi substantie vel permanentis dividitur in modum permanentis in se, per quem significat id quod significat nomen substantivum, et in modum permanentis in alio, per quem significat id quod significat nomen adiectivum.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.101: adiectiva dependent in esse a suis substantivis.
  - 4) Michel de Marbais: modus significandi fluxus vel fieri dividi potest in modum significandi fluxus vel fieri per se et in modum fluxus vel fieri in alio.
  - 5) R.H. Robins, Thrax, p.101.



adverb cannot determine the nomen or pronomen which signify by means of the mode of substance (1), but he is, however, prepared to admit that an adverb can properly determine another adverb as in the sentence, e.g. *lego multum bene*. Thomas is more positive than the others, though it would be misleading to exaggerate this; he states that the adverb, by reason of its *modus generalissimus*, can determine only the verb or participle, i.e. which signify by means of the *modus esse* - however the adverb may determine other partes by means of some other mode, i.e. *specialis* (2) or *accidentalis*, as in the case of the exclusive adverbs, e.g. *tantummodo*, *solummodo*, which can determine anything which is capable of being excluded (3); the little that Siger did have to say does throw a little light on the use of the accidental mode in this context. He argues that in a sentence such as "*tantum Socrates currit*", the adverb '*tantum*', by virtue of its general essential mode, modifies, i.e. disposes the act,

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- 1) Michel de Marbais: *ipsum adverbium non potest specificare sive determinare, nisi aliquid habens modum significandi fluxus vel fieri. Unde nomen vel pronomen determinare non potest, cum utrumque per modum substantie significet.*
  - 2) Thomas uses *modus specialis* as an alternative term for the *modus subalternus*: at a later stage in his discussion of the adverb, he tells us that the subaltern modes derive from Donatus's *significatio* (which Donatus called an accident), and then defines '*significatio*' as a *modus essentialis species*, cf. Thomas of Erfurt, #153: *significatio non est modus accidentalis, ..... quia est extra rationem adverbii absolute. Furthermore, when discussing the conjunction he uses 'specialis' as an intermediate stage between the modus generalissimus and specialissimus, cf. Thomas of Erfurt, #174: modus significandi essentialis generalissimus dividitur in duos modos speciales, ad specialissimos descendendo.*
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #150: *adverbium, de suo modo significandi essentiali generalissimo, tantum determinat ea, quae per modum esse significat; licet de aliquo modo essentiali, speciali, et accidentali, possit alia determinare ut patet de adverbiiis exclusivis..... quae, propter modum significandi per modum excludentis, possunt determinare omne illud, quod habet se per modum exclusibilis.*



i.e. the verb with reference to Socrates, but by virtue of the mode of exclusibility, it seeks to exclude this particular act from all other possible authors of this action (1). This seems to be the Modistic way of saying that by means of the *modus generalissimus*, the adverb modifies the verb only, but it can have syntactic relations with other *partes orationis* by means of various other modes of signifying. This is not confined to verbs or participles, and a *nomen* and other *partes* are capable of being excluded and can therefore be determined by an adverb as in "*homo tantummodo legit*". Michel was clearly not happy about this and argues that in a sentence such as "*tantum ens ~~re~~um opponitur falso*", the adverb '*tantum*' does not determine the *nomen* but the *verbum substantivum* or the participial element, so that we can have as an alternate the sentence "*tantum quod est ~~ve~~rum apponitur falso*" (2). Unfortunately, Michel did not offer any interpretation of the sentence "*homo tantummodo legit*", so that we cannot say whether Michel would have described this as determination of the *nomen* or *verbum*.

#### 5.1211 Modus significandi essentialis

The Modistae describe the essential mode of the adverb (3), and

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.147: dicendo: *tantum* Socrates currit, hoc adverbium '*tantum*' in quantum adverbium est, disponit actum per comparationem ad Socratem, in quantum tamen exclusivum excludit actum illum ab omnibus aliis.
  - 2) Michel de Marbais: Hoc adverbium '*tantum*' non determinat *nomen*, sed determinat *verbum substantivum* vel eius participium sub-intellectum de bonitate tamen intelligentis, ut '*tantum ens verum opponitur falso*' vel '*tantum quod est verum opponitur falso*'.
  - 3) cf. Appendix C: the diagram shows, in particular, Thomas's organisation of the adverb.



of the other indeclinable partes according to the same methods that we have encountered in their descriptions of the declinable partes (1), i.e. Siger divides his essential mode into two equal parts, the general and specific, while Thomas begins with his *modus generalissimus* which, as has been pointed out (2), is in the case of the indeclinables the equivalent to Siger's specific mode: Thomas uses his *modus generalissimus* to define the *pars* in question, and subdivides it into the *modus subalternus* and further into *modus specialissimus*, which, as we have seen in the other *partes orationis*, is the means he adopts for describing more exhaustively the types and classes of word which go to make up this particular *pars orationis*.

Siger's general mode is the mode of disposition (*modus disponentis*), i.e. the syntactic relationships which the adverb has with other words, and this is clarified and narrowed down - since it cannot have similar and equal syntactic relationships with all other words, - by means of the specific mode which states that the adverb signifies by means of the mode of determining the act or anything else which signifies by means of becoming (3), i.e. the verb or participle.

It is at this stage that Thomas enters: his *modus generalissimus* defines the adverb as a *pars orationis* signifying by means

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1) cf. the Diagram on p.186 which shows the relationship between Siger's general and specific modes, and Thomas's *modus generalissimus*.

2) cf. p.447.

3) Siger de Courtrai, p.146: *significare per modum determinantis actum vel aliquid quod rem suam significat per modum esse, fieri, motus vel actus.*



of the mode of adjacency to another which signifies by means of the *modus esse* which, as we have seen (1) is the essential mark of the verb and participle, and by doing so determines it, i.e. the verb or participle (2). This *modus generalissimus*, as defined by Thomas, stresses, as we have just seen, that feature, i.e. the mode of adjacency, which brings it close, in syntactic function, to the adjective. Thomas points out the 'adjectivality' of the adverb and suggests that there are some adverbs which do not determine the participle, since some adverbs may determine the verb by reason of the verb's accidental modes of *compositio* and mood (3) which the participle does not possess - Thomas goes so far as to suggest that this may have been at the back of Priscian's mind when he called the adverb the '*adiectivum verbi*' (4).

The definition of the essential mode of the adverb, and indeed of all the indeclinable partes, stresses that Siger is in fact a very real grammarian; he realised, as others did, that semanticisation was not going to be as successful as in the declinable partes, and although he was able to define the specific mode in syntacto-semantic terms, he stated the general mode, common to all the indeclinable partes, in formal syntactical terms. But by

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1) cf. p. 316-7.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #150: *modus significandi essentialis generalissimus abverbii est modus significandi per modum adjacentis alteri, per modum esse, significans ipsum simpliciter et absolute determinans.*

3) cf. 5.1122, pp. 345-49: 349-57.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #150: *licet adverbium dicatur adiectivum verbi, hoc est ideo, quia adverbium, secundum omnes species eius, determinat verbum, sed non participium; quia adverbia determinabilia verba genera compositionis, et genera sui modi, qui est qualitas compositionis, participia determinare non possunt, cum participium compositionem et modum verbi non habeat. Et sumitur iste modus determinantis a proprietate terminantis in re.*



stating a common function to the indeclinables by means of the general mode which is at the same time a respective mode (1), Siger has tried not so much to place the indeclinable partes on ~~the~~ equal footing with the declinable partes, but to give a very grammatical reason for their existence in grammar, and Siger thus lays much less stress on their dissimilarities and much more on their similarities (2).

### Modus subalternus

As in the other partes, Thomas alone uses this sub-division of the essential mode along with its own sub-division of modus specialissimus as a means of describing in more details the various kinds of adverbs; the modus specialissimus becomes, in fact, a fairly exhaustive inventory of the adverb in the Latin language, and little need be said of this section, since it adds nothing to Thomas's theory of the adverb.

The first division of the modus generalissimus is the subaltern mode and there are in the adverb two subaltern modes, the first being the mode of signifying by means of the mode of determining the verb or participle by reason of the meaning of the adverb, e.g. unde, multum, qualiter, prudenter (3), and the

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.131: modi significandi respectivi dicuntur qui conceduntur dictioni in comparatione ad modum significandi alterius dictionis eis proportionalem et tales sunt principium constructionis quia sunt principium unionis constructibilis cum constructibili. This suggests a double reason for the formal syntactic nature of the general mode, i.e. the respective mode is by definition a syntactic mode and the general mode of the adverb is similarly by definition a syntactic mode.
  - 2) O. Jespersen, The Philosophy of Grammar, p.87.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #151: primus est modus significandi per modum determinantis verbum, vel participium ratione significati.



second by means of the mode of determining the verb or participle by reason of the mode of signifying of the verb or participle, e.g. *cur*, *forsan*, *etiam*, *non*, *utinam*, *quando*, *nunc* (1), i.e. the first subaltern mode contains those adverbs which remain discrete from the verb by reason of their own denotative meaning and the second subaltern mode contains those adverbs which must operate with the verb by reason of certain accidental modes of the verb. These accidental modes are *compositio*, *modus* and *tempus* (2); such adverbs have a much more restricted use - i.e. they are collocationally restricted adverbs - than those adverbs deriving from the first subaltern mode, and require further comment. Clarification is to be found in the appreciation of the particular natures of three accidental modes of the verb to which the adverbs of the second subaltern mode refer: *compositio* and *modus* refer to the relationships between *suppositum* and *appositum* of the favourite SP type of sentence, and *tempus* is an accidental mode of the verb only by virtue of the temporal adverb which therefore signifies more about the action of the verb caused by the *suppositum*. We shall see in the section on syntax (3) that the adverb can determine either member of an intransitive *constructio* (4) which represents the favourite SP or NV type: if the adverb determines the V element, it can in theory be any type of adverb, but if it determines the *suppositum* (5) it will

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, #151: *secundus modus est modus significandi per modum determinantis verbum vel participium ratione modi significandi.*

2) cf. 5.1122.

3) cf. 5.24.

4) cf. 3.13 and 5.241.

5) cf. 3.13 and 5.24.



be an adverb of the second subaltern mode only. Adverbs of the first subaltern mode are therefore to determine the verb by virtue of their own denotative value, while adverbs of the second subaltern mode are very restricted in their function, the adverbs of compositio and mood being restricted to a determination of the verb by virtue of its dependence on the suppositum, and the adverbs of time also being considerably restricted, not by the NV relationship but by the very necessary collocation of tenses of the verb, since it is obviously incongruous to collocate a future tense with an adverb of 'past time'.

Donatus posited three accidents for the adverb, i.e. significatio, degree (comparatio) and figura; the Modistae did not describe in any detail the accidental modes of the adverb, (in fact Siger makes no mention of them at all and Thomas dismisses them very summarily, e.g. Thomas of Erfurt, #162: de comparatione, specie et figura dicendum est hic sicut in nomine, - which is all he has to say about the accidental modes of the adverb), but what became of the accidents described by Donatus? Thomas tells us quite baldly at the end of his description of the essential modes that comparatio, species and figura in the adverb are the same as in the nomen (1); significatio, Thomas tells us (2), is contained in the two subaltern modes just described: significatio in the adverb, like

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- 1) Apart from anything else, this serves to confirm that accidentia and declinatio were not the same for the Modistae; in the nomen comparatio was included as one of the modi specialissimi, while species and figura were absolute modes, so that it is quite clear that the Modistae were prepared to set up accidental modes to explain the derivational modes for the indeclinable partes.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #151: hos duos modos Donatus appellat significationem adverbii...per significationem in adverbio, dat intelligere duos modos essentielles subalternos mediatos.



qualitas in the nomen was clearly a device used by Donatus (1) to establish certain basic types of the pars in question, i.e. qualitas was used in the nomen to establish the fundamental types of nomen, i.e. nomen proprium and nomen appellativum (2), and similarly Thomas uses significatio to create the two subaltern modes which constitute the two fundamental types of adverb. This relationship to qualitas in the nomen and the verb further enhances the position of the adverb, as morphologically associated with the nominal, since qualitas establishes two fundamental morphological types of nomen (though they are semantically dressed), and as syntactically linked with the verb, since qualitas in the verb creates the accidental mode of mood (modus) which represents the quality of compositio (3) which is one of the most important accidental modes of the verb (4) and together they control the syntax of the verb and its subject. It should be noted that one of the subaltern modes of the adverb, the mode which determines the verb by reason of its mode of signifying, divides into the modi specialissimi of compositio, modus and tempus which are syntactical and not inflectional accidental modes of the verb (5). Significatio is thus the mode of signifying by means of which the adverb determines the verb or participle either by means of the denoted meaning of the adverb, e.g. ubi, qualiter, or by association with a particular mode of

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- 1) The Modistae did not make quite the same use as Donatus did of qualitas in the pronomen; they did however, make a comparable use of significatio in the adverbium.
  - 2) Donatus: qualitas nominum in quo est? Biperta est: aut unius nomen est et proprium dicitur, aut multorum et appellativum.
  - 3) cf. p. 349-50.
  - 4) Thomas goes so far as to call it a "modus significandi accidentalis communissimus".
  - 5) cf. p. 377.



signifying of the verb (1), e.g. cur, forsan.

An interesting feature of the treatment of the indeclinable partes was a tendency on the part of the Modistae, especially Thomas to describe certain features of the indeclinable partes quite exhaustively; this is certainly true of Thomas's subaltern modes of the adverb and their subdivisions of modi specialissimi, which he describes in some considerable detail. This does, of course, suggest a slight inconsistency on Thomas's part; it has already been pointed out (2) more than once that the Modistae had pedagogy always, to some extent, in mind, but we have also argued (3) that it is not so much Latin grammar as grammar that the Modistae had in mind, and yet some of the Modistae show, from time to time, curious departures from an otherwise considerable consistency, i.e. Thomas by his relatively exhaustive description of certain aspects of the nomen, e.g. the nomen adiectivum and adverb and Siger by his tendency to describe the accidental modes of the nomen and verb in terms of Latin syntax. It would be pointless to consider this an animadversion of the Modistae, since they obviously viewed Latin in the light of the intellectual spirit of their day as the universal language from which alone grammar should be illustrated. It does not seem possible to offer any valid explanation for Thomas's excursion into exhaustiveness, as far as the adverb is concerned, except to say that both instances

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #153: significatio in adverbio est modus significandi, quo mediante adverbium repraesentat specialem modum determinandi verbum, vel participium aut ratione significati, aut ratione modi significandi.
  - 2) H. Roos, Die modi significandi, p.141.
  - 3) cf. p. 39, 519.



of exhaustiveness, in the nomen and adverb, are connected with the 'adjectivality' of the nomen and adverb. This, along with the definition of the adverb as a determinant of a verbal or participial member, serves to accentuate the near syntactic parallelism and morphological non-parallelism which the Modistae had wrongly assumed to exist in Latin, between the nomen substantivum, nomen adiectivum, verbum and adverbium, which places the adverb in an almost mid-way position between the great word-classes (1).

The subaltern modes are each divided into various modi specialissimi: the diagram in Appendix C shows the whole structure of Thomas's organisation of the different essential modes of the adverb. It seems therefore that little more would be achieved by a detailed analysis of these modi specialissimi since they merely represent an inventory of the adverbs of Latin dressed up in Modistic terminology.

The first subaltern mode of the adverb (2) is divided into four modi specialissimi, which constitute four species of adverbs, i.e. the adverbs of place, quality, quantity and appellation (vocandi). The adverb of place is divided into two, by means of the modes of enquiring about or referring to place (3), which are further divided until we reach a detailed list of

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- 1) R.H. Robins, *Thrax*, p. 102.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #154: *modus significandi per modum determinantis verbum vel participium ratione rei significatae, dividitur in quatuor species essentielles quatuor species adverbiorum constituentes.*
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #155: *adverbium loci...determinat rem verbi ratione loci...vel per modum requirentis locum, vel respondentis ad locum.*



adverbs of place of Latin, Similarly the adverbs of quantity and quality are each divided into two (1), which produces a detailed if not exhaustive list of such adverbs; the fourth modus specialissimus constitutes the adverb of appellation (2) which is in effect the adverb "o" used with the vocative of the substantive as in "O Henrice, lege" (3).

The second subaltern mode (4) is divided also into three modi specialissimi, which clearly derive by virtue of certain of the accidental modes of the verb they determine, i.e. by means of 1) compositio, ii) modus, and iii) tempus. The first is made up of 14 modi specialissimi which serve to determine the inherence of the verb (5) and it will be remembered that compositio, as an accidental mode of the verb, serves to establish the relationship between the suppositum and the verb, e.g. the interrogative

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #156-7: adverbium quantitatis significat per modum determinantis rem verbi vel participii ratione mensurae continuae vel discretas...et hoc vel per modum requirentis mensuram, ut quantum; vel per modum respondentis mensuram, ut semel, bis, ter...adverbium qualitatis significat per modum determinantis rem verbi vel participii ratione qualitatis...vel per modum requirentis rem verbi, ut qualiter; vel per modum respondentis ad qualitatem, ut docte, prudenter.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #158: adverbium vocandi est quod verbum ratione actus exercitandi determinat, prout ad ipsum resolvitur substantia vocativi vocata, ut, o Henrice, lege.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.154: "O" est adverbium et est tale adverbium, scilicet vocandi. Ratione qua adverbium est, semper construitur cum verbo, vel expresso vel subintellecto, sicut videmus in aliis adverbis quae aliquando construuntur cum verbis subintellectis.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #159: modus significandi per modum determinantis rem verbi vel participii ratione modorum significandi dividitur in tres modos, scilicet: in modum significandi per modum determinantis verbum vel participium ratione compositione; et...ratione temporis; et...ratione qualitatis sive modi; qui dicuntur indicativum, optativum, imperativum, etc.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #160: modus significandi per modum determinantis verbum ratione compositionis est modus significandi per modum determinantis inhaerentiam verbi.



adverb, which constitutes one of these modi specialissimi, determines the inherent quality of the verb in the shape of asking the cause, e.g. *cur* (1). The second modus subalternus is made up of two modi specialissimi which constitute two types of adverb, i.e. the interrogative adverb of time, e.g. *quando*, - which might also be included as one of the modi specialissimi which, as just mentioned, are derived by means of 'compositio' - and the answering adverb of time, e.g. *nunc*, *hodie*, the first one signifying by means of the mode of determining the verb by means of the mode of asking the time, and the second one by means of the mode of answering (2). The third, i.e. the mode of signifying by means of mood is divided into two modi specialissimi which constitute the adverbs of wish and exhortation (3), and are closely connected with the mood of the verb they determine, i.e. the adverb of wish, e.g. *utinam*, is closely connected with the optative mood - and it will be remembered that Siger described this mood as a "principium constructionis" in conjunction with this adverb (4).

The subaltern modes and their modi specialissimi demonstrate a definite division among the adverbs: the first subaltern mode

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #160: adverbia interrogandi determinant inhaerentiam verbi sub ratione requirentis causam, ut *cur*.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #161: modus significandi per modum determinantis verbum ratione modi, qui est qualitas inclinationis, subdividitur in duos modos specialissimos, duas species adverbiorum constituentes, quae sunt adverbia optandi, ut *utinam*, et hortandi, ut *eia*, *age*.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #161: modus significandi per modum determinantis verbum sub ratione temporis subdividitur in duos modos speciales, duas species adverbiorum constituentes, scilicet: adverbium temporis interrogativum, ut *quando*, et responsivum, ut *nunc*, *hodie*.
  - 4) cf. p. 354-5.  
Siger de Courtrai, p.114: iste modus (i.e. optative) est principium constructionis cum hoc adverbio optandi: *utinam*.



and its modi specialissimi which constitute the adverbs of place, quantity, quality and appellation, represent adverbs<sup>4</sup> which have their own denotative meaning, and the second subaltern mode and its modi specialissimi of compositio, mood (modus) and tempus represent adverbs which must operate with the verb and by reason of these same accidental modes of the verb.

Thus the adverb can be divided, by means of its modi subalterni and specialissimi, into adverbs of place, quantity, quality, and appellation which determine the verb by virtue of their meaning, and into adverbs which determine the verbs by virtue of its mode of signifying and consist of i) adverbs which determine the adverb by virtue of the accidental mode of compositio (1), ii) adverbs which determine the verb by virtue of its mood, and iii) adverbs which determine the verb by virtue of its accidental mode of tempus.

#### 5.122 Coniunctio.

Thrax defined the conjunction as "a part of speech connecting the train of thought and filling in gaps in its interpretation" (2), a definition which Priscian tightened

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #162: adverbium determinans verbum ratione compositionis subdividitur in adverbium interrogandi, dubitandi, affirmandi, negandi, modificandi, ordinis, similitudinis, eventus, prohibendi, eligendi, congregandi, demonstrandi, residendi, excludendi.
  - 2) R.E. Robins, A. & M., p.40.



considerably by expounding it in much more formal terms as the part of speech which connected other words (1); he too resorted to semantic criteria to explain the conjunction further, in that it provided this link according to the meaning it gave the words it linked or else it served to demonstrate the relationship between these words. Donatus's definition (2) is to all intents the same as Priscian's, and this too is therefore a more formal definition than Thrax's definition. It was this definition that the mediaeval grammarians accepted and so we find the Modistae defining the conjunction as the *pars orationis* which signifies - we must not attach too much value to the strained sense of 'signify' in this context (3) - by means of the mode of joining two elements of a construction, and essentially this definition is to be found

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- 1) Priscian: *coniunctio est pars orationis indeclinabilis, coniunctiva aliarum partium orationis, quibus consignificat, vim vel ordinationem demonstrans.*
  - 2) Donatus: *coniunctio quid est? Pars orationis adnectens ordinansque sententiam.*
  - 3) The Modistae are, however, quite consistent in using 'signify' here as a grammatical criterion since this is a general criterion throughout their treatises. It must be pointed out that in their indeclinable, *partes*, 'signify' comes to mean 'function syntactically', which has a modern touch to it, since Professor Firth would argue that grammatical meaning of a word is the way it is used, cf. J.R. Firth, *The Technique of Semantics, Papers in Linguistics*, p.7-33.



in Michel de Marbais, Thomas of Erfurt and Martin of Dacia (1) - Siger, as we know, is incomplete and we have to rely on the account given in his grammatical sophismata, but his specific essential mode is usually his vehicle for the definition of the pars in question, and so we find that he varies only a very little from the other Modistae by defining the conjunction or perhaps more exactly, the specific mode of the conjunction, as signifying by means of the mode of uniting (2).

The Modistae distinguished two types of conjunction which they did in keeping with Priscian's definition; these conjunctions are not divided in a way which could be compared to the normative grammar of today - the Modistae ignored the subordinating conjunction (3) - this may of course, be the result of their syntactical theories, since, if we are to take Thomas's theories on syntax (4) as typical, a construction is made up of two members, one of which is the dependent and the other the terminant, and the conjunction is always used with

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- 1) Michel de Marbais: coniunctio...est pars orationis significans per modum coniungentis.  
 Thomas of Erfurt, 77170: coniunctio est pars orationis, per modum coniungentis duo extrema significans.  
 Martin of Dacia: coniunctio significat per modum coniungentis vel connectentis alias partes orationis.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.148: modus specialis coniunctionis est significare per modum unitatis extendendo unionem.
  - 3) Thomas does, in fact, introduce the question of the subordinating conjunction once in his consideration of perfectio, cf.5.233.
  - 4) cf. p.547.



reference to one member of the construction or between two constructions, and will be the determinant (1), and as such will be the link between two equal parts.

The conjunction, in Modistic language, was divided into two and as such constituted two types of conjunction: the first one joins by means of meaning (*per vim*), e.g. *et*, *vel*, and the second by means of the relationship existing between the two parts, (*per ordinem*) e.g. *ergo*, i.e. in the first instance no particular link is required by either of the two members but in the second instance, one member may require a particular link with reference to the other member - this second type of conjunction can be considered logically subordinating, but it is the subject-matter of either member and not the structure of the parts or the whole which calls for this second type of conjunction. This means, in effect as Wallerand suggests (2), that there is an equal relationship between each member; in the first place, the two parts will be linked together either with regard to a third member e.g. *Socrates et Plato currunt* and *Socrates vel Plato currit*, but in the second instance, the relationship is either one of cause and effect or antecedent and consequence, e.g. *Socrates currit; ergo movetur*, and *terra interponitur inter solem et lunam; ergo luna eclipsatur* (3).

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1) cf. p.560-1

2) G. Wallerand, *Op. cit.*, p.(55).

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #173: *modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema secundum ordinem ex parte ante se tenentia...per modum coniungentis duo extrema secundum ordinem ex parte consequentis se habentia.*



Donatus had by means of the accident of 'potestas', established five species of conjunction, i.e. copulative, disjunctive, expletive, causal and rational: Thomas divides his subaltern modes in terms of Donatus' potestas, i.e. the copulative and disjunctive are sub-members of the first modus subalternus which contains the first type of ~~conjunction~~ <sup>conjunction</sup> mentioned previously, i.e. which joins by means of its meaning (1), and the causal and rational conjunctions are sub-members of the second subaltern mode which contains the second type of conjunction, i.e. which joins by reason of the mutual relationship between the two parts (2). Thomas included the fifth species set up by Donatus, i.e. the expletive conjunction, but really only as an after-thought after describing the modi subalterni and specialissimi. His argument for doing this is quite simple: such conjunctions are not truly conjunctions since they do not join but merely decorate the parts to be joined, and therefore are not very necessary in a sentence (3). If they are to be included in a general statement about the conjunctions, it is sufficient to say that the conjunction either joins or decorates, but it is the conjunction which does

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #172: modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema per vim est modus significandi, uniendi duo extrema, quae inter se dependentiam non habent.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #173: modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema secundum ordinem est modus significandi unientis duo extrema per ordinem inclinata.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #174: quaedam coniunctiones dicuntur expletivae, quae secundum veritatem non sunt coniunctiones, quia non coniungunt, sed tantum coniuncta ornant, et in sermone non sumuntur propter necessitatem, sed propter ornatum.



actually join which must be described in detail, since it is the only true conjunction.

There was one problem, which, in the light of the definition of the conjunction as the *pars orationis* signifying by means of the mode of joining, must have caused the Modistae some little trouble, since both Siger and Michel refer to it and discuss it at some length. It is, once more, a problem of their own creation and as a result of their semanticisation of a formal definition: curiously enough, it is a problem which Thomas, as a result of the organisation of his procedure, was able to avoid. It was a question of how to reconcile the definition of their specific mode as the mode of joining with the species of conjunction described by Donatus as a disjunctive conjunction; in other words, how do we reconcile the apparent contradiction of a specific mode which signifies by means of the mode of joining and an accidental mode which signifies by means of the mode of separation (1). Both Siger and Michel answer the query

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1) Siger de Courtrai, p.149: *modus significandi accidentalis non debet repugnare modo specifico, nunc potestas est accidens coniunctionis secundum Donatum et potestas disiunctiva repugnat modo specifico coniunctionis quia significare per modum unientis et significare per modum distinguentis repugnant, quia distinguere et unire repugnant; dico quod aliquid unum et idem bene distinguit et unit respectu diversorum...et ideo haec coniunctio 'vel' dicendo: "Socrates vel Plato currit", unit Socratem respectu Platonis, tamen distinguit alterum respectu cursus.*



in an almost identical manner, and mention of it is only made to show once more the tortuous argument they had to make in order to answer a problem which a formal definition would have answered so easily. Both Siger and Michel agree that a conjunction can both join and separate, but with regard to different things, i.e. in "Socrates vel Plato currit", the disjunctive conjunction 'vel' joins Socrates with regard to Plato and vice versa, but it separates 'Socrates' and 'Plato' as far as the running (cursus) is concerned (1); the disjunctive conjunction, in that it is a conjunction, joins the two parts grammatically (2), but in that it is disjunctive, it separates them semantically with regard to the meaning of the verb (3). Such an analysis is quite close in effect to a modern Immediate Constituent analysis, but is, however, clothed in very different language; 'Socrates' and 'Plato' are capable of being linked together, in this instance by 'vel' (4), and they are also capable of being separated again in this

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.149: haec coniunctio 'vel' dicendo: Socrates vel Plato currit", unit Socratem respectu Platonis, tamen distinguit alterum respectu cursus.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.149: coniunctio disiunctiva, in quantum coniunctio est, coniungit aliqua invicem ratione modi significandi proportionalis.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.149: in quantum disiunctiva, disiungit significata illorum respectu tertii per modum significandi similiter proportionalem.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p.149: per modum significandi proportionalem hoc quod est 'Socrates' et 'Plato' significant per modum disponibilis et unibilis, et ideo haec coniunctio 'vel', ut coniunctio est, significans per modum unitatis et disponentis, constructionem habet congruam cum eis.



instance by 'vel', with regard to the verb 'currit' (1).

We can represent the analyses thus:

Socrates vel Plato / currit

Socrates / vel Plato / currit.

Michel is less wordy in this explanation than such a conjunction, though as a conjunction it signifies by means of the mode of joining, joins two members but separates them with regard to a third (2): this explanation is very close to Thomas's definition of a disjunctive conjunction, but Thomas saved himself the trouble of such a lengthy and dubious explanation by making of it a sub-mode, i.e. *modus specialissimus* (3) of the first subaltern mode of the conjunction.

#### 5.1221 Modus significandi essentialis.

It has already been explained (4) that Siger

- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.149-50: hoc quod est Socrates et Plato significant per modum disiungibilis respectu alicuius tertii; ista coniunctio 'vel' de suo modo significandi accidentaliter significat per modum disiungentis respectu tertii et ideo constructionem congruam habet...
- 2) Michel de Marbais: coniunctio disiunctiva, unde coniunctio est, significat per modum coniungentis... Ipsa tamen...supra modum istum addit suum modum disiungentis...Nec isti sibi ad invicem repugnant, quia ipsa coniungit aliqua inter se et disiungit ea in respectu alicuius tertii...Dicendo "Sor vel Plato currit", hec coniunctio 'vel' coniungit le 'Sor' et le 'Plato'... disiungit tamen respectu del 'currit'.
- 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #172: secundus modus est modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema inter se, distinguendo ea respectu tertii.
- 4) cf. p.444-6.



insisted on two general modes for the conjunction as for the other indeclinable partes, i.e. general and specific: we find therefore, that the general mode is the same as in the other indeclinables and expresses its general syntactic function, while the specific mode is used to particularise this function and this is to signify by means of the mode of uniting (1). Siger explains that he has been able to make such a definition as a result of Priscian's definition (2), in that Priscian's use of the term *coniunctiva* (connecting) he equates to his own term of *modus disponentis*, which is clearly true to the extent that '*disponere*' expresses the general syntactic function just as '*coniungere*' does in the case of the conjunction, and Priscian's use of "added meaning and exhibiting their mutual relationship" (*vim vel ordinem demonstrans*) Siger equates to his own specific mode which, as we have said, is the more particular syntactic function, peculiar to the conjunction.

Thomas, as we have already explained (3), cannot use the matter-form contrast in the indeclinable partes, and his *modus generalissimus* tends to say very much the same as Siger's specific mode: in the case of the conjunction

1) cf. p. 468.

2) Siger de Courtrai, p.148: hoc quod dicit '*coniunctiva*' tangit modum disponentis quia *coniungere* *disponere* est, vel per hoc quod dicit "*vim vel ordinem demonstrans*" circumloquitur modum significandi specificum ad illa duo, scilicet, modum unitatis, et hoc modo in diffinitione verbi circumloquitur modum fieri esse vel motus peragendi vel patiendi.

3) cf. p. 447.



Thomas is uncharacteristically brief, and all he has to say about the *modus generalissimus* is that it is the mode of signifying by means of the mode of joining two members (1); this he explains briefly by non-linguistic means, i.e. that this mode is derived by reference to the external word, from that property of joining to be found in things in the external world of realities (2).

#### Modus subalternus.

This mode, peculiar to Thomas, is his means of developing in detail the definition made of the essential mode in his *modus generalissimus*. Donatus described three accidents in the conjunction, i.e. *potestas*, *figura* and

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #170: *modus significandi essentialis generalissimus coniunctionis est modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema.*
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #170: *sumitur iste modus significandi a proprietate coniungentis et unientis in rebus extra.*



ordo: we saw in the adverb (1) to which Donatus had attributed three accidents, i.e. significatio, comparatio and figura, that one accident, i.e. significatio, became for Thomas the material from which he created his two subaltern modes and their modi specialissimi. Similarly, we find that Thomas's treatment of Donatus's accidents in the conjunction is very similar, i.e. two accidents, figura and ordo, to which Thomas adds species, become his accidental modes (2), and the third, i.e. potestas, he uses to furnish the material for his modi subalterni and specialissimi. It was seen in dealing with the adverb (3), that Donatus used significatio to enumerate the different types of adverb without listing them exhaustively, and in the case of the conjunction, we find that Donatus uses potestas to enumerate the different types of conjunction, which he divides into five, i.e. disjunctive, copulative, expletive, causal and rational (4), all of which reappear in Thomas as modi

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1) cf. p. 460.

2) cf. p. 481-2.

3) cf. p. 461.

4) Donatus: potestas coniunctionum quot species habet? Quinque. Copulativas, disiunctivas, expletivas, causales, rationales.



specialissimi of the conjunction. A further feature of Thomas's organisation reveals the great consistency in their procedure, whatever our criticisms may be of their criteria; we saw that significatio in the subaltern modes of the adverb (1) was constituted as a special mode of determining the verb or participle by virtue of its own meaning or of the modes of signifying of the verb or participle. Similarly the subaltern modes of the conjunction are divided by means of their meaning or by means of the mutual relationship between the members that the conjunction is used to link, and as such 'potestas' becomes a special mode of joining (2). Like significatio 'potestas' is not an accidental mode but becomes an essential mode to classify the different types of adverb (3). There are therefore two subaltern modes of the conjunction,

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1) cf. p. 460-1.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, // 171: potestas in coniunctione consistit in speciali modo coniungendi.

3) Michel de Marbais: potestas est quidam modus significandi datus coniunctioni ad designandum rem sub modo essendi vel ratione coniungentis in ratione copulantis vel disiungentis vel expleutis vel in ratione cause vel effectus vel antecedentis et consequentis.



the first of which is the mode of joining by way of meaning and the second is the mode of joining by way of the relationship between the members (1).

The first subaltern mode is the mode of joining two members which have no dependence (2) on each other, such as two substantives, two adjectives or even two sentences, which have no necessary mutual relationship (3). This subaltern mode is divided into two modi specialissimi, the first one of which is the mode of signifying by means of the mode of joining two members together with regard to a third member of a construction (4), and these constitute the copulative conjunctions: the second modus specialissimus is the mode of joining two members together but by distinguishing them from the third member of the construction (5), and these constitute the disjunctive

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #171: dividitur iste modus coniungentis duo extrema in modum coniungentis duo extrema per vim, et in modum coniungentis duo extrema per ordinem.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #172: modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema per vim est modus significandi, uniendi duo extrema, quae inter se dependentiam non habent.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #172: duo substantiva, vel duo adiectiva, vel duas orationes, inter se ordinem non habentes.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #172: primus est modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema inter se, et respectu alicuius tertii. Et iste modus constituit conjunctiones copulativas.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #172: secundus modus est modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema inter se, distinguendo ea respectu tertii. Et hic modus constituit conjunctiones disiunctivas.



conjunctions.

The second subaltern mode is the mode of joining two members which are drawn together by virtue of their mutual relationship (1), and this mode is divided into two modi specialissimi; the first modus specialissimus is the mode of joining two members according to the relationship they derive from the first member (2), and this mode constitutes the causal conjunctions which expresses the relationship of cause and effect, e.g. Socrates currit; ergo movetur: the second modus specialissimus is the mode of joining two members according to the relationship they derive from the second member (3) and this mode constitutes the rational conjunctions, which express the relationship of antecedent and consequence, e.g. "terra inter ponitur inter solem et lunam; ergo luna eclipsatur".

Traditional grammar divides the conjunction into coordinating and subordinating: the conjunctions outlined in Thomas's modi subalterni and specialissimi are all of

<sup>1)</sup> 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #173: primus est modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema secundum ordinem ex parte ante se tenentia. Et hic modus constituit coniunctiones causales.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #173: secundus est modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema secundum ordinem ex parte consequentis se habentia. Et hic modus constituit coniunctiones rationales.

~~3) Thomas of Erfurt, #173: secundus est modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema secundum ordinem ex parte consequentis se habentia. Et hic modus constituit coniunctiones rationales.~~

1) Thomas of Erfurt, #173: modus significandi per modum coniungentis duo extrema secundum ordinem est modus unientis duo extrema per ordinem inclinata.



the coordinating type: Thomas's account of the conjunction, in so far as a normative and even more so as a descriptive grammar of Latin is concerned, is very incomplete since he says nothing of the subordinating conjunctions, nor does he say anything at all of those conjunctions which require a certain mood (1).

We can summarise the essential modes of the conjunction thus (2): every conjunction which is used to join two elements (3) does so in one of two ways, i.e. either by virtue of its meaning or of the relationship between the two elements. If it joins by virtue of its meaning, the conjunction joins the two elements with regard to a third member of the construction, e.g. *Sor et Plato currunt*, or else it joins the two elements but distinguishes them with regard to a third member, e.g. *Sor vel Plato currit*. If, however, the conjunction joins by virtue of the mutual relationship between the words it joins, it does so either

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- 1) It is interesting to see the influence of logic on sentence structure in the Modistic scheme: the subordinating conjunction, for instance, is omitted since it plays very little part in logic.
  - 2) cf. Appendix C; the diagram explains the structure of the Modistic conception of the coniunctio.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #174: *omnis coniunctio aut coniungit duo extrema, aut duo extrema coniuncta ornat. Si coniungit, hoc est dupliciter; aut per vim, aut per ordinem.*



by stating the relationship which derives either from the first and is transferred to the second, or from the second to the first. Thus, just as the *modus generalissimus* is divided into the *modi subalterni* and the *modi specialissimi*, so the conjunction is divided according to its meaning or the relationship between the words it joins: the conjunction according to its meaning is divided into the copulative and disjunctive conjunctions, and the conjunction according to the mutual relationships may be considered as the causal and rational conjunctions.

5.1222 Modus significandi accidentalis.

At the very end of his description of the adverb, Thomas had stated (1), almost as an afterthought, that the accidental modes of the adverb, *comparatio*, *species* and *figura*, were the same as in the *nomen*. Similarly, in the conjunction, Thomas posits three accidental modes, i.e. *species*, *figura* and *ordo*: Donatus had posited *potestas*, *figura* and *ordo* as accidents of the conjunction, but of these, Thomas included *potestas* as a feature of the subaltern essential mode (2). Of the three accidental modes of the conjunction as described by Thomas, *species*

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1) cf. p. 460 :  
2) cf. p. 476 :



and figura are derived from the same properties as are the same features in the nomen (1). Thomas takes<sup>S</sup>, therefore, these same features in the nomen as his yardstick and describes the derivational aspects of the adverb and conjunction according to the same pattern in the nomen (2) - they are, however, absolute modes and the pars in question can therefore have no part in any syntagm by virtue of the accidental modes of species and figura.

Donatus's third accident, ordo, (3) is included by Thomas as an accidental mode of the conjunction; this is an active mode of signifying by means<sup>7</sup> which the conjunction consignifies (4) the order of the members that it is joining together (5) - this refers to the word order of the conjunction in relation to these members, and it is by virtue of 'ordo' that the conjunction is pre-posed,

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #175: de specie et figura in coniunctione idem sicut in nomine dicendum est; ab eisdem enim proprietatibus sumuntur utrobique.
  - 2) cf. p. 255. Thomas does not, however, give us any examples of species or figura as accidental modes of the conjunction.
  - 3) Donatus: ordo coniunctionem in quo est? Quia aut praepositivae coniunctiones sunt, ut: ac, ast; aut subiunctivae, ut: que, autem; aut communes, ut: et, igitur, ergo.
  - 4) cf. p. 80-2, for a discussion of the technical term 'consignificare'.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #175: est ordo in coniunctione modus significandi activus, quo mediante coniunctio ordinem extremorum significat.



post-posed or either pre-posed or post-posed to the members it is used to link together (1). There are two possible explanations for the inclusion of 'ordo' as an accidental mode - unfortunately Thomas does not expatiate on this aspect of the conjunction, and we are perforce compelled to speculate ourselves. Donatus, we must remember, described ordo as an accident, though it does not necessarily follow that whatever Donatus called an accident will constitute for the Modistae an accidental mode (2): a much more likely explanation, and one hinted at by Thomas (3), is a reference to the external world of things, i.e. just as things can be linked together so can words and sentences be linked together. We have already seen that Thomas is prepared to make word order a relevant feature in grammar; we are, however, no longer dealing with the signification of the conjunction, but with the consignification, which we have elsewhere described as functional or syntactic meaning, therefore if word order is a relevant syntactic feature, it will be so by means of consignification, and therefore ordo will be an accidental mode, a) because it cannot be a subaltern essential mode since it does not create any type of conjunction, and b) if it is syntactically functional,

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶175*: *ratione cuius ordinis aut coniunctio praeponitur tantum, aut postponitur, aut indifferenter praeponitur et postponitur extremis coniunctis.*

2) cf. p. 232.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶175*: *ordo in coniunctione sumitur ab ordine in rebus ab extra.*



it must be a respective mode, and in Thomas's scheme only accidental modes can be respective: so ordo, which establishes the syntactic valence of the relative word order of the conjunction in relation to the partes orationis that it joins together, must be an accidental mode (1). This fits it well into the Modistic descriptive scheme in that an accidental mode expresses variations additional to the 'essence' of the pars which occur from without: the essence of the conjunction (though this stretches the whole concept of 'essence' to a very flimsy length) is to join words or sentences together and this, i.e. ordo, is the one permitted variation to this essence apart from the derivational items previously mentioned.

### 5.123 Praepositio

The Modistae were quite clearly dissatisfied with the definition of the preposition handed down from the Greek and Latin grammarians: Thrax had defined the preposition as "a part of speech placed before other parts

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- 1) Priscian's reasons for ordo being considered an accident of the conjunction should be noted in this context, cf: Priscian (XVI, 15-16): ordo accidere dicitur coniunctionibus, qui communis est paene omnibus dictionibus. Quaedam enim naturaliter praeponuntur, ut praepositiones casualibus et adverbia peraque verbis... Est tamen quando auctoritas praepostere his utitur.... similiter igitur coniunctiones pleraeque tam praeponi quam supponi possunt. Sunt tamen quaedam quae semper praeponuntur, ut 'at, ac, vel'.. aliae quae semper supponuntur, ut 'que, ne'... aliae paene omnes indifferenter et praeponi et supponi possunt, ut 'et, atque'.



of speech in syntactical combinations and in word formation" (1); this is echoed almost exactly by Priscian in his definition (2). This definition was unsatisfactory to the Modistae because of its confusion of syntax and word-formation which was unacceptable to the Modistae as a result of their theory that each and every word must have its own meaning. Donatus's definition of the preposition (3) was even more unacceptable to the Modistae, since it too does not take into consideration the meaning of the preposition considered as a word, but tends to treat the preposition more as a separable and inseparable prefix.

The preposition was conceived by the Modistae as the means of designating the relationship which certain substantial properties have towards the act, some being used to express the fact that the substance is undergoing an action and others to express the limit of the action (4). Siger pointed out in his introductory remarks to the preposition that the preposition was used with the accusative, dative, etc. to express the relationship between the nominal, i.e. nominal form and the act, i.e. the verbal form: the nominative and vocative do not require such a

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1) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.40

2) Priscian: est praepositio pars orationis indeclinabilis, quae praepositur aliis partibus vel appositione vel compositione.

3) Donatus: praepositio...est...pars orationis quae praepositae aliis partibus orationis significantionem earum aut complet aut mutat aut minuit.

4) G. Wallerand, Op. cit., p.(55).



link since their relationship to the act is quite different (1); the preposition was devised to designate transitivity, but the nominative and vocative must be intransitive (2). The terms 'transitive' and 'intransitive' have already been dealt with (3), but it must be pointed out once more that these terms were used by Thomas in particular to describe the fundamental types of constructions and the relationships between the two constituent members: an intransitive construction is of the type N V, e.g. *Socrates currit*, in which the relationship between the nomen 'Socrates' and the verb 'currit' is realised by means of 'compositio' which is an accidental mode of the verb: a transitive construction is of the type V N, e.g. *legit librum*, but it would be possible to have a transitive construction of the type V p N, e.g. "*currit ad campum*", which could be used to illustrate Siger's argument of verbs being either unaidedly or aidedly transitive, but in both cases the relationship between the verb and the post-posed oblique nominal form is realised by means of 'significatio', and accidental mode of

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.150: non autem nominativo nec vocativo, quia actus de se unit se ex parte ante nominativo et vocativo.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.150: praepositiones sunt ad retorquendum casualem ad actum et iterum quia omnes praepositiones inventae sunt propter habitudines transitivas denotandas...nunc nominativus et vocativus sunt intransitivi.
  - 3) 3.13



of the verb, the counter-balance to 'compositio (1). Thomas recognises the feasibility of such a construction (2) and includes it, without illustration or further discussion, among his transitive constructions 'actuum' (3). Siger also explains that some verbs which are unaidedly (vehementer) transitive do not require a preposition to link them to the case form, e.g. amo, but there are other verbs which are not unaidedly (non vehementer) transitive, e.g. venio, and require a preposition to link them to the case-form and for this purpose prepositions were invented (4). Siger admits, in saying all this, that he is following Priscian, which explains perhaps the more formal nature of his statement of Latin syntax.

Thomas denies that the preposition was devised just to express transitivity, since there are some verbs which

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1) 3.12 and 3.13.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, 214: principia propria congruitatis huius constructionis "percutio Socratem" sunt duo modi conformes, scilicet: modus dependentis vel transeuntis, sub modo ut alterum et modus terminantis sub modo ut alterum et modus terminantis sub modo ut quem. Si ille modus ut quem sit praepositione contractus, tunc similiter modus transeuntis sub modo ut alterum proportionabiliter est contrahendus.

3) cf. 5.2421.

4) Siger de Courtrai, p.150: unde quaedam sunt verba quae sunt ita vehementis transitus quod de se et immediate possunt transire in casuale, ut: amo..., et quaedam sunt quae non sunt vehementis transitus, quod etiam possunt de se et immediate transire in casuale, ut: venio..., propter quod praepositiones adinventae fuerunt ut, ipsis mediantibus, casuale retorquatur ad actus tales.



require the preposition but which express no transition (1) e.g. *sum in domo*, and indeed in an example such as "*annulus ex auro*", a non-classical construct, the nomen '*annulus*' requires a preposition and yet cannot express any transition. The preposition was devised, Thomas argues, to provide the link between the act and the case-forms, i.e. accusative and ablative; it will be remembered that when Thomas discussed the accidental mode of case in the nomen (2) he defined the accusative as analagous to "*quem*" and the ablative as analagous to "*quo*", but these cases are both referable to the act by means of a preposition (3), and such a union is made by means of prepositions which govern the accusative or ablative (4). Therefore, Thomas argues, the preposition was created in the first place to link up with the case-form and then to restrict the case-form to its relation with the act,

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶176*: *quaedam verba praepositiones exigunt, quae tamen nullam habent transitionem, nec velocem, nec tardam, ut dicendo, "sum in domo"*.
  - 2) cf. p. 293.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶176*: *accusativus est modus significandi ut quem, contrahibilis per modum ut ad quem... similiter ablativus est modus significandi per modum ut quo, contrahibilis ut a quo*.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶176*: *talis coarctatio casualis fit per praepositiones accusativo casui, vel ablativo deservientes*.



i.e. the verbs (1).

The preposition for the Modistae is therefore a *pars orationis* which signifies by means of the mode of turning the substance back to the act (2) which is a semantic re-statement of the more formal definition that <sup>a</sup>preposition and a *nomen* can create a <sup>n</sup>adverbial phrase and combine with a verb to make an endocentric construction with the verb as the head of such a construction. Siger admits that Priscian perceived many similarities between the adverb and preposition (3) which Siger agreed would be possible as a result of the general essential mode of the preposition (4). Both Siger and Thomas are more specific than Michel in their definition of the preposition. Thomas defines it as the *pars orationis* which signifies by means of the mode of being adjoined or next to another case-form

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, // 176: *praepositio inventa est, ut primo modum casualem contrahat et coarctet; et deinde casualem ad actum reducat.*
  - 2) Michel de Marbais: *prepositio est pars orationis significans per modum retorquentis substantiam ad actum.*
  - 3) Priscian: *adverbia quidem et sine casibus et cum casibus proferri possunt...praepositiones vero suam significationem servantes semper casibus adiunguntur, ut 'per',...quando adverbium est, mutat significationem et pro 'valde' accipitur.*
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai, p.151: *iste modus significandi (generalis) potest haberi per Priscianum qui vult quod praepositiones disponant aliquo modo actum sicut adverbia, unde plurimas ponit convenientias Priscianus... inter praepositiones et adverbia.*



but referring it back to the act (1); Siger echoes this (2) in his specific mode, which, as we have seen before (3) was his means of defining a pars orationis, but states more specifically in his definition the case-forms to be considered. Siger's habit of following Priscian closely, as far as the indeclinable partes are concerned, stands him in good stead, because he is able to make a much more economic statement than either Thomas or Priscian by means of his specific mode, which states succinctly what was Priscian's intention in saying that the prepositions are next to case-forms only and in particular only to the accusative and ablative - as far as Latin is concerned.

As a result of their theory that every word must have its own individual meaning, the Modistae took strong 'exception' to the statement of their predecessors that one of the functions of the prepositions was to be used as a

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, *176*: est praepositio pars orationis, significans per modum adiacentis alteri casuali, ipsum contrahens, et ad actum reducens.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.151: modus specificus est modus significandi per modum retorquentis casuale ad actum casuale inquam se habens up 'quem' vel ut 'quo'.
  - 3) cf. p. 474.



prefix in word-formation. Michel states categorically that such words are not prepositions (1). This is clearly a false identification of the bound morpheme with free word-classes and although the Modistae did not express it so formally, they denied the status of word to such forms because they signify nothing and are therefore not words nor do they possess modes of signifying (2). According to the predecessors of the Modistae, a preposition could be such in one of two ways, i.e. by apposition or by composition; the Modistae argued, rightly so, that the first type represents the genuine preposition since it retains its *modus generalissimus* of expressing the relationship between the substantial element and the act (3), but the second kind cannot be a preposition since it merely completes, changes or reduces the meaning of the word with which it is compounded and loses its real function as a preposition (4) by acting as a prefix (5). Siger comes

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- 1) Michel de Marbais: *omnis prepositio addita parti per compositionem non est vere prepositio.*
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #180: *praepositiones in compositione non sunt verae praepositiones, quia per se nihil significant, cum non sint per se dictiones, nec etiam per se modum significandi habent.*
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #179: *per appositionem, cum praepositio servat sibi vim divisionis, et manet praepositio per eius modum significandi essentialem generalissimum. Et haec est vera praepositio, et ab aliis partibus orationis distincta.*
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #179: *praepositio (in compositione) non retrahit, nec retorquet, sed complet, aut mutat, aut minuit.*
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #189: *sed adduntur aliis dictionibus tamquam syllabicae adiectiones, ut 'met', 'pte', et huiusmodi.*



to the support of Priscian arguing that Priscian did not really mean to suggest that such prefixes were prepositions, because as prefixes they lose their meaning as words, and cannot therefore be partes orationis, but Siger argues that Priscian merely suggested the similarity between two forms, one of which is a preposition and the other a bound morpheme used as a prefix (1).

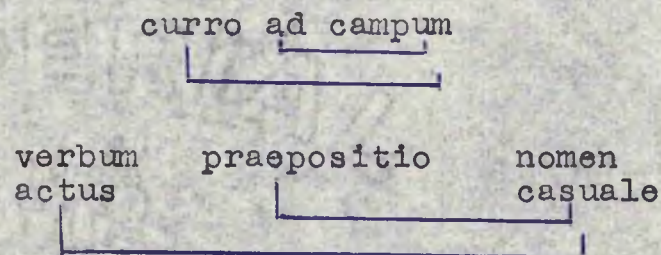
#### 5.1231 Modus significandi essentialis.

In the preceding section, it was seen by the definitions of Siger and Thomas, ~~but~~ <sup>that</sup> the essential modes of the preposition, hidden beneath Modistic semanticisation of the formal definitions the Modistae had inherited from Thrax and Priscian, consist, for Siger, of a general mode, which as in the other indeclinable partes, represents a common feature of syntactic relationship by means of the mode of disposition and his specific mode is the mode of signifying by means of the mode of uniting the case-form with the act, i.e. the verb. This is substantially the same as Thomas's modus generalissimus which is defined as

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.151: manifestum est quod non est pars secundum intentionem Prisciani, et si non est pars, non est praepositio, propter quod manifeste patet quod talia addita aliquibus non sunt praepositiones secundum intentionem Prisciani, tamen talia quae sunt praepositiones, si cadunt cum eadem parte cum illis cum quibus componuntur, habent aliquam similitudinem cum praepositionibus veris.



the mode of signifying by means of the mode of adjacency to some case-form and referring it back to the act (1). As in the case of the other indeclinable partes, Thomas justifies his definition of the modus generalissimus by reference to the world of reality, and the source of such a modus generalissimus is to be found in the property of determination and limitation to be found in the property of determination and limitation to be found in the external world (2). This relationship between the case-form and the act can be described by means of the following diagram, e.g.



#### Modus subalternus.

Donatus ascribed only one accident to the preposition (3), i.e. casus, by means of <sup>which</sup> ~~the~~ he stated the different kinds of preposition, i.e. those prepositions which are used with the accusative, those with the ablative and those

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #176: modus significandi essentialis generalissimus praepositionis est modus significandi per modum adiacentis alteri casuali ipsum contrahens, et ad actum retorquens.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #176: iste modus praepositionis sumitur a proprietate determinationis et coarctationis in rebus.
  - 3) Donatus: praepositioni quod accidunt? Unum..Casus tantum..Accusativus et ablativus.



with both cases: Thomas used this accident of casus (1) as he had used Donatus's accidents in the other declinable and undeclinable partes (2), to establish his subaltern modes and so casus comes to constitute a special mode of referring and junction (3). There are, therefore, three subaltern modes of the preposition, the first of which is the mode of signifying by means of the mode of contracting and joining the accusative (4), the second by means of the mode of contracting and joining the ablative (5) and the third by means of contracting and joining either the accusative or ablative (6).

The subaltern modes are divided into their modi specialissimi; once more, Thomas resorts to an exhaustive inventory in order to compensate for his inability to semanticise, and we find then that Thomas tends to provide

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- 1) cf. Appendix C for a diagram of the structure of the Praepositio.
  - 2) cf. p. 228-9: 427: 461: 476: 501.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #177: casus in praepositione consistit in speciali modo contrahendi et retorquendi.  
Michel de Marbais: modus significandi accidentalis (casus) dicitur modus significandi retorquentis casuale ad actum in ratione termini terminantis vel in ratione principii initiantis.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #177: primus est modus significandi per modum contrahentis et retorquentis accusativum tantum.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #177: secundus modus est modus significandi per modum contrahentis et retorquentis ablativum tantum.
  - 6) Thomas of Erfurt, #177: tertius modus est modus significandi per modum contrahentis et retorquentis accusativum et ablativum, scilicet utrumque indifferanter.



a more detailed list of a pars orationis whenever he is unable to provide a semanticised formal statement - formal definitions take a back seat in the declinable partes but are resorted to in syntactic form much more frequently in the indeclinable partes, when semantics can clearly offer no satisfactory explanation of a feature or when the various species of a pars cannot be described in terms of meaning. The first subaltern mode, i.e. the mode by means of contracting the accusative, is divided into 30 modi specialissimi which constitute 30 different types of preposition, e.g. apud, ante, etc., all of which have their different modes of contraction with the case-form (1): the second subaltern mode is divided into 15 modi specialissimi which contract with the ablative and constitute 15 different types of preposition, e.g. a, ab, absque, etc. (2): the third subaltern mode is divided into 4 modi specialissimi which constitute 4 types of preposition which can contract with either the accusative or ablative, e.g. in, sub, super, subter.

We see then that just as the modus generalissimus of

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #177: quae diversos habent modos contrahendi casuale.
  - 2) This means that there is one mode, one modus specialissimus for each preposition.



the preposition is divided into three subaltern modes which themselves are divided into various modi specialissimi, so the preposition is divided into three groups, each of which contains an exhaustive list of its constituents, i.e. into prepositions which are used with the accusative, into prepositions which are used with the ablative, and into prepositions which are used with both the accusative and ablative (1); further the prepositions used with the accusative are divided into 30 types of prepositions, the prepositions with the ablative into 15 different types, and the prepositions with both the accusative and ablative into 4 different types.

#### 5.124 Interiectio.

An important change made by Latin grammarians in the list of word-classes was the separation of the interjection from the adverb (2); the Greeks had included the interjection as a sub-class of the adverb (3), since they both determine the verb, even if the verb is understood. The

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #178: praepositio simpliciter sumpta dividitur in praepositiones deservientes accusativo tantum, et in praepositiones deservientes ablative tantum, et in praepositiones deservientes utrique.
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.152: quia interiectiones habent significationem verbi et non adverbia, ideo Latini separant eam ab adverbio et ab aliis partibus orationis.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.152: Graeci ponebant interiectionem sub adverbio quia interiectiones determinant ipsa verba expressa sive subintellecta.



first grammarian, we are told (1), to make of the interjection a separate pars orationis was Remmius Palaemon, and this change was also made by Donatus and Priscian: Priscian established that the interjection required no syntactic union necessarily with any part of the ~~sense~~<sup>sentence</sup>, and so it came to be defined as a pars orationis which signifies a state of mind (2).

The Modistae retained Priscian's and Donatus's (3) definition, and Michel de Marbais indeed reproduced Donatus's definition almost word for word (4). Donatus had ascribed to the interjection only one accident, i.e. significatio, which creates the different types of interjection to express the different emotions, i.e. joy, fear, admiration, etc. and we shall see that Thomas uses significatio as he had used other accidents in the other indeclinable partes (5), as a device to create different types of interjection - the interesting thing being that this time he

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1) R. H. Robins, A. & M., p.58.

2) Priscian: romanarum artium scriptores separatim hanc partem ab adverbii accipere, quia videtur affectum habere in se verbi et plenam motus animi significationem, etiamsi non addatur verbum, demonstrare.

3) Donatus: interiectio..est pars orationis significans mentis affectum voce incondita.

4) Michel de Marbais: interiectio est pars orationis significans rem suam per modum animi afficientis.

5) cf. p. 461: 476: 501.



by-passes the *modus subalternus* completely, and uses Donatus's *significatio* directly as the source of the *modi specialissimi* which are the modes of signifying for the different kinds of interjection (1).

The Modistae mark, however, a retrograde step on Donatus and Priscian - at least, Martin and Thomas do, by insisting on the intimate relationship between the verb and interjection. It has already been stated that one of the reasons for the Greeks including the interjection as a sub-class of the adverb was its relationship with the verb: Priscian freed the interjection from such a restricted function on the formal grounds of syntactic freedom (2), and in the Middle Ages we find grammarians such as Martin of Dacia and Thomas of Erfurt insisting once more on its close association with the verb. Thomas defined the interjection as a *pars orationis* which signifies by means of the mode of determining something, i.e. verb or participle, by representing an attitude or change of mind (3); ~~Be~~

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- 1) cf. p. 501 ; this refers to the different allocations of features to the subaltern and accidental modes by the Modistae in contrast to Donatus's allocation of the same features.
  - 2) cf. p. 497.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, 181: *interiectio est pars orationis significans per modum determinantis alterum quod est verbum vel participium, affectus vel motus animae repraesentans.*



he justifies this by recourse to Donatus's definition of the interjection (1), but it seems much more likely that he was led to stress its affiliation to the verb as a result of the argument, that 'every sentence must have a verb'. Siger has been accused of conservatism (2) of being too faithful to his classical models, but in the case of the interjection, at least, he has provided us with a definition which is much more satisfactory, if we can accept any semantic definition of a grammatical category as satisfactory - at least he has not stepped out of character, and so we find that, as in the other indeclinable partes, his general mode postulates the syntactic function which the interjection shares with the other indeclinables, and his specific mode becomes the definition of the particular pars, and so we can say of the interjection that its general mode functions by means of the modus disponentis and that it fulfils its specific function by means of the modus specificus, i.e. by

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #181: hoc voluit Donatus significare, cum dixit, quod "interiectio est pars orationis significans mentis affectum, voce incognita", id est, conceptum mentis sub voce nondeliberata, sed quasi abrupte prolata. It would be interesting to know who was responsible for the change of 'incognita' for 'incondita'; 'incognita' is also to be found in Siger. Keil, in his edition, i.e. Grammatici Latini, Vol IV, has 'incondita' and offers no variant.
- 2) G. Wallerand, Op. cit., p.(72).



signifying by means of the mode of affecting the mind (1); therefore, as Siger points out (2) the interjection signifies a concept of the mind because speech cannot express what has not first been conceived by the mind - but it does not do this by determining the verb or participle in particular.

5.1241 Modus significandi essentialis.

There is little need to dwell at any length on the essential modes of the interjection: as has just been pointed out, Siger, as in all the other partes orationis, divides the essential mode into general and specific, the general mode being to signify by means of the mode of disposition and the specific mode being to signify, i.e. to function syntactically, as postulated in the general mode, by means of the mode of affecting the mind (3). Siger's specific mode is normally the equivalent to Thomas's *modus generalissimus* in the indeclinables, but

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.152: *generalis est significare per modum disponentis...specialis est significare per modum efficientis animam.*
  - 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.152: *licet interiectio significet mentis conceptum quia nihil est per vocem significatum nisi prius fuerit conceptus ab intellectu, tamen illum conceptum significat interiectio per modum efficientis animam.*
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.152: *specialis est significare per modum efficientis animam.*



it has been suggested that in the interjection there is a divergence of opinion, and Thomas defines his *modus generalissimus* as the mode of determining the verb or participle and representing different states of mind (1); the mind is affected by different emotions, e.g. sorrow, fear, joy, etc., and the interjections serve to express these different states of mind.

Modus specialissimus.

Donatus ascribed one accident to the interjection, i.e. *significatio* (2), by means of which he established the various types of interjection. In the other indeclinables (3) Thomas used Donatus's accident, i.e. *significatio* in the adverb, *potestas* in the conjunction, and *casus* in the preposition, as the source of his subaltern modes, which were the general types of the *pars* in question to be refined into the different types by means of the *modi specialissimi*. In the interjection, however, Thomas dispenses with the subaltern modes, and divides the *modus generalissimus* directly into four *modi specialissimi*,

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #181: *modus significandi essentialis generalissimus interiectionis est modus significandi per modum determinantis alterum, quod est verbum, vel participium, affectiones animi repraesentans.*
  - 2) Donatus: *interiectioni quid accidit? Tantum significatio.*
  - 3) cf. p. 461 : 476 : 494.



which constitute four different types of interjection: once more, Thomas falls back on a purely semantic analysis of the Latin interjection, rather than develop the theory of the interjection (if this is indeed possible) as a feature of general grammar, and little is, therefore, to be achieved by a detailed analysis of Thomas's *modi specialissimi*. There are four *modi specialissimi* which represent four types of interjection, all of which signify by means of the mode of determining the verb or participle, and each expresses a different state of mind (1), i.e. sorrow, e.g. *heu*, joy, e.g. *evax*, admiration, e.g. *papae*, and fear, e.g. *deeh*. All of these are derived from the same property as Donatus's *accident* of *significatio*, and the *significatio* of the interjection becomes a special mode of determining the verb or participle by representing some special state of mind (2).

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #182: *primus est modus significandi interiectionis per modum determinantis alterum, motum doloris vel tristitiae in anima repraesentans... secundus modus est modus significandi per modum determinantis alterum, motum gaudii vel laetitiae in anima repraesentans... tertius modus est modus significandi per modum determinantis alterum, motum admirationis in anima repraesentans... quartus modus est modus significandi per modum determinantis alterum, motum terroris, vel metum repraesentans.*
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #182: *significatio interiectionis consistit in speciali modo determinandi, specialem motum in anima repraesentans.*



5.2 Diasynthetica.

It was pointed out earlier (1), that the Modistae used only two of the traditional divisions of grammar, i.e. Etymologia and Diasynthetica, in their descriptive process; Siger and, so Roos tells us (2), Martin of Dacia did not actually use these terms, but Martin certainly, and Siger, it seems reasonable to say might well have if his work had been complete, divided his material according to this dichotomy, Etymologia being the analysis of the partes orationis in terms of their modes of signifying, and Diasynthetica the theory of the syntax of these partes orationis.

There is a curious division and also association between these two parts of Modistic grammar; the two parts are actually kept strictly apart, - indeed Roos points out (3), that the separation is so severe, that of the extant manuscripts of Martin's grammatical treatise, not a few contain no section on syntax; yet on the other hand the whole Modistic theory of syntax is based on the modes of signifying, which were in the first place created as a device for describing the partes orationis alone, so that grammatical concord, a purely syntactical feature, is expressed in terms of the inter-relationships between the accidental modes of the partes involved (4) and the other major syntactical relationship too,

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1) cf. p. 208-10.

2) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p. 139.

3) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p. 139.

4) cf. p. 180: 533.



i.e. government (1) is expressed by means of the modes of signifying (2).

Scholars have maintained that syntax was the main object of mediaeval grammatical writings, but it does seem that the wish was often stronger than the deed (3). As in modern linguistic theory, syntax was not entirely satisfactorily handled by the Modistae, if the lacunae in their work are any guide, but obviously for different reasons; it may well have been that semantics produced, by Modistic standards, satisfactory criteria in defining the partes orationis, but semantics alone are clearly unsatisfactory for syntax, so that if logic is excluded, the only criteria left to the grammarian are formal criteria, and the Modistae did not make any systematic use of these in describing their syntax. Mention has just been made of the association between Etymologia and Diasynthetica despite their actual physical separation; this is in fact a very important achievement, since the inter-penetration of levels, though not practised by all modern schools of linguistics, is looked upon by

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1) Cf. p. 97-8 for a discussion of 'government'.

2) cf. p. 539

3) Roos has defined the treatises on the modes of signifying as 'Lehre der Wortklassen', and it does seem that the Modistae were for the most part content with their analyses of the partes orationis; a similar gap can be found in the work of many modern linguists who rarely venture beyond their phonological studies. It is also quite clear that mediaeval syntactic theories do merit careful and detailed study, and contain much of interest to the modern linguist, and Thurot is therefore quite wrong in his assessment of mediaeval syntactic theories, cf. Ch. Thurot, Op.cit., p.237.



many scholars (1) as an important and very necessary feature of linguistic description.

If we take Thomas's section on Diasynthetica as typical of Modistic syntactic description, we would find that it can be, for purposes of analysis, divided into four parts, e.g. the principles of construing (*principia construendi*), construction (*constructio*), 'congruence' (*congruitas*) and completion (*perfectio*): the principles of construing are clearly based on Aristotle's four ~~cases~~ of material, formal, efficient and final (2). Thomas uses these principles in the analysis of the three stages of syntax, i.e. *constructio*, *congruitas*, and *perfectio*, so that we have two inter-related processes, i.e. i) *constructio* represents the combinations of constructibles (3), *congruitas* the proper congruence of such a combination (4), and *perfectio* completes the process of expressing a mental concept (5), because *perfectio*, in addition to the requirements of the *constructio* (6), calls for a complete construction to contain a *suppositum* and *appositum* (7), i.e. subject and predicate, and ii) each construction is subject to analysis in terms of the four principles of construing, i.e. the material represents the members of the potential construction, the formal represents the construction itself, the efficient represents the

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1) cf. the work of scholars such as K.L. Pike, W.S. Allen, J.R. Firth, etc.

2) cf. p.520-23.

3) cf. 5.24

4) cf. 5.232

5) cf. 5.233

6) cf. 5.24

7) cf. pp. 92: 529-45 for a discussion of these technical terms.



'congruence', i.e. the mutual appropriateness (*congruitas*) (1) of the construction, and the final the completed construction (2) which has satisfied all the requirements for the expression of a compound concept of the mind. Thomas completes his section on syntax by a more detailed description of the different types of construction (3) and then by an explanation of *congruitas* and *perfectio* as features in linguistic description rather than their application to any particular type of sentence.

This type of syntactical theory represents a great change from the work of the predecessors of the Modistae; Peter Helias, Robert Kilwardby, etc. wrote their grammars in the form of commentaries on Priscian, which means that they were, of necessity, much more restricted to Latin syntax, whereas the Modistae, whatever their failings and inability to escape their environment, did attempt to create something quite new in the form of a syntactic theory of their own in which we can see the burgeonings of a syntactical theory which contains features to be found in the analytical procedures of certain modern linguists (4). In this, they are much more original than in their analyses of the *partes orationis* which were, as has been shown (5), mere semanticisations of the formal categories of Priscian's grammar.

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1) '*congruitas*' seems to have been a general relational term used by the Modistae to state the relations of concord, governmental concord, government (or rection), collocation, colligation and context of situation.

2) cf. 5.22.

3) cf. 5.24.

4) cf. the work of K.L. Pike, etc. re the interpenetration, and the work of R.S. Wells and other American linguists for the theory of Immediate Constituents which Thomas suggests in the structure of the constructions he analyses, cf. 5.24.

5) cf. p. 28.



5.21 Syntax in the Middle Ages.

Scholars are agreed that there was, in the Middle Ages, a considerable increase in the study of syntax (1) since it is a part of grammar which is susceptible to rules and principles (2); this statement must be qualified, however, in that apart from commentaries on Priscian by grammarians such as Peter Helias and Robert Kilwardby, there seem to have been few, if we are to believe Thurot (3), systematic treatises on syntax (4) - teaching manuals such as Alexander de Villedieu's (5) are not considered in this context since they can hardly be said to be theories of syntax.

It would be quite wrong to say that the mediaeval grammarians made no progress in their syntactical theories; they, i.e. Peter Helias, Robert Kilwardby, etc. (6), are, it is true, largely content to follow Priscian, but we do find in their work improvements on the theories of their predecessors, though always of course within the framework imposed on their conception of grammar by the structure of the languages they knew and also in terms of the syntactic systems expounded by their predecessors.

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- 1) Ch. Thurot, Op.cit., p., 213.  
J.A. Tolson, unpublished M.A. Thesis.
  - 2) J.E. Tolson: I am indebted to him for the loan of his unpublished thesis which is a critical edition of Peter Helias's commentaries on the Priscian Minor.
  - 3) Ch. Thurot, Op.cit., p.237.
  - 4) Reference has already been made to the probable importance and value of mediaeval syntactic theory; Thurot seems to have overstated his case, and it is quite clear that he was unacquainted with much of the writings of the Modistae.
  - 5) Alexander de Villedieu, Doctrinale (ed. D. Reichling).
  - 6) The speculative grammarians are not included in this group.



Wackernagel (1) notes, inter alia, that mediaeval grammarians introduced the concept of suppositum and appositum (2), that they learned to distinguish between government (regimen) (3) and concord (congruitas) (4) and that the copula was introduced as a syntactic element; in addition to this, we can see in Thomas of Erfurt the first signs of an Immediate Constituent analysis (5) such as is practised today (6). But in all this, their analysis never goes beyond nominal constructions, e.g. homo albus, exocentric constructions, e.g. Socrates currit, the formalised syllogism of Aristotelian and mediaeval logic, the use of the copula, e.g. vir est albus, all of which were imposed, without their realising it, on their theory by the requirements of the syntax of the classical language.

The use that mediaeval grammarians made of the opposition of suppositum-appositum is perhaps their most important achievement in syntax, though it was not until the Modistae that it seems to have been refined and extensively used. Apollonius had taught that a complete sentence should consist of two words only, and

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1) J. Wackernagel, Vorlesungen über Syntax, Vol. 1., p.23.

2) cf. p. 92-4.

3) cf. p. 97 for a discussion of this term and its use by the Modistae.

4) cf. p. 99-101: 532-40.

5) cf. 5.24.

6) R.S.Wells, Immediate Constituents, Language 23 (1947), 81-117.  
H.A. Gleason, An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics, (1955), p. 133-140.



and his term 'syntaxis' Priscian interpreted as 'constructio' (1), and Priscian, therefore, considered only a construction consisting of a nomen and verb to be complete and had, as a result, taught that a sentence without a nomen or pronomen and a verb was incomplete (2); yet the classical grammarians do not seem, if we are to accept the verdict of scholars such as Thurot (3), to have understood the distinction between subject and predicate, and Priscian certainly did not use terms such as 'subiectum', 'praedicatum', 'suppositum' and 'appositum' - this, however, is understandable since Priscian was not a logician and would not as a result look to logic to provide him with his terminology.

Peter Helias used the terms 'supponi' and 'apponi' to describe the subject and predicate (4), and these terms seem to have established themselves in the form of 'suppositum' and 'appositum' as technical terms in mediaeval syntactic theory: there seems, as a result, to have been no need for them to have recourse to logic for terms such as 'praedicatum' and 'subiectum'. It is interesting to note that the Modistae do make use of these terms (5) but <sup>not</sup> very

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- 1) Ch. Thurot, Op. cit., p. 214
  - 2) Priscian: si tollas nomen aut verbum, imperfecta sit oratio.
  - 3) Ch. Thurot, Op. cit., p. 216-7.
  - 4) Peter Helias: sicut enim nomen repertum est ad significandum de quo dicitur, ita et verbum ad significandum quid de aliquo dicitur. Unde nomen nunquam apponitur nisi auxilio verbi substantivi, nec verbum supponitur nisi auxilio nominis substantivi: sed quodlibet nomen per se supponitur et verbum per se apponitur.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #116: Licet hoc verbum 'est' non significet aliquid essentialiter ab ente distinctum, attamen in ista propositione subiectum accipitur ut materia, et praedicatum ut forma, quae essentialiter differunt.



frequently (1) and this is no suggestion that they ever supersede suppositum and appositum as technical terms in their syntax.

Roos, is, of course, quite right (2) to stress the difference between the prescriptive grammarian of the Middle Ages and the Modistae who sought to produce a theory of grammar rather than a teaching manual, and this is apparent in Modistic syntactic theories as well as in their analysis of the partes orationis. If we cannot subscribe to Roos's statement (3) that syntax was 'das Hauptziel' of mediaeval grammar, at least as far as the Modistae are concerned, who in some cases stopped short when they came to a consideration of syntax (4) and in others did not devote the same detailed attention to their analysis of syntax as they had done to the partes orationis, we must not on the other hand belittle Modistic syntactical theory (5). It is quite clear that, for instance, Thomas's section on syntax represents an attempt to break away from tradition and, despite its many shortcomings, becomes a concise, very systematic and as a result very original statement of syntactic theory. Even so, Thomas was not able to rid himself entirely of his past nor of his intellectual background, since the unconscious

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- 1) If word frequency counts have any value in a context such as this, I have recorded the following occurrences in Thomas: appositum = 32, praedicatum = 10: suppositum = 125, subiectum = 25.
  - 2) H. Roos, Op. cit., p.151: Martin de Dacia und seine Nachfolger wollten nicht so sehr eine empirische Grammatik als vielmehr 'Prolegomena zu einer Grammatik' schreiben. Sie geben eine Metaphysik der Grammatik oder die 'Theorie' der Grammatik überhaupt.
  - 3) H. Roos, Die Modi Significandi, p. 140.
  - 4) Siger de Courtrai and Michel de Marbais.
  - 5) J. Wackernagel, Op. cit., p.22: von der Sprachwissenschaft des Mittelalters darf man nicht mit Verachtung sprechen. Wir verdanken ihr gerade auf dem Gebiet der Syntax wertvolle Erkenntnis und Termini, die für uns schlechterdings unentbehrlich sind.



influence of the favourite sentence-type of Latin, and the restraints that logic placed on his concept of grammatical structure show through his syntactic theory, e.g. he makes little attempt to describe the syntax of the subordinating conjunction - he refers to one example only of the use of a subordinating conjunction (1) (and had not indeed listed this type of conjunction at all in his consideration of this *pars orationis* (2)), since mediaeval logic made little use of this type of conjunction. Furthermore, his rudimentary IC type of analysis (3) is based entirely on the primary exocentric and endocentric constructions of Latin such as "Socrates currit" and "lego librum", and in the final analysis his 'perfect' construction must contain a *suppositum* and an *appositum* in the same sense that Priscian required a noun and a verb for a complete sentence (4).

#### 5.211 Theories of the Modistae.

An important feature of Modistic syntactical theory was its development from being a normative grammar to an attempt to become a theory of syntax. It is not possible, however, to say with any absolute degree of certainty, whether the Modistae would have

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1) cf. 5.23.

2) cf. 5.122.

3) This term is used here as a form of shorthand to suggest the kind of analysis Thomas proposed, but which is today practised by most modern linguists.

4) Priscian: *si tollas nomen aut verbum, deficiet oratio, desiderans vel verbum...*



produced a syntactical theory as uniform as their description, despite variations in presentation, of the partes orationis had been. Roos says that the Etymologia is orientated in terms of its syntax, which is confirmed by Thomas (1), but we have no means of confirming this by reference to Siger or Michel since their work is incomplete.

Thomas and Martin follow closely the order of Priscian (2), i.e. they describe the partes orationis as such in the section on 'Etymologia' and then discuss the partes orationis at another, i.e. syntactic level in the section on 'Diasyntheticam'. Throughout the discussion of the partes orationis there is an unconscious division between Thomas and Martin on the one hand and Siger and Michel on the other as a result of their presentations of the essential modes of signifying of the eight partes orationis (3); furthermore, Thomas and Martin have complete sections on syntax, and although Siger does make a reference at the end of his discussions of the

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #22: primo prout sunt principium formale partis orationis absolute, secundum quem modum pertinent ad Etymologiam: deinde prout sunt principium intrinsecum constructionis unius partis cum alia, secundum quem pertinent ad Diasyntheticam.
  - 2) Martin of Dacia: Nam Priscianus in minori volumine docet congruam iuncturam dictionum et quidquid docet est propter ipsam sicut litteram, sillabam, dictionem et species et alia. Unde maius volumen ordinatur in minus volumen. Quod et Priscianus ostendit, cum secundum incipiens dicit: Quoniam in ante expositis libris...(Quoted by Roos, p.140.)
  - 3) cf. the essential modes of the partes orationis, i.e. 5.1111; 5.1121; 5.1131; 5.1141; 5.1211; 5.1221; 5.1231; 5.1241.



nomen (1) to a projected section on syntax and Michel also refers to his "Questiones supra Priscianum" in which he would presumably deal with matters of syntax, but this work is not available - indeed Thurot makes no reference to it, it is not easy to conjecture on the nature of their syntactical theory.

The only real information we have of the syntactic theories of Michel and Siger indeed rests in their discussion of the various modes of signifying as 'principia constructionis' (2). It is possible, however, to suggest a number of similarities between Thomas's and Siger's syntactical procedure, which does reinforce the impression that the closeness in their syntax might well have been as close as their analysis of the partes orationis. Siger defines the construction as a combination of constructibles (3) which is analagous to Thomas's definitions (4). Siger, without saying so specifically, seems to have followed Priscian (as indeed Thomas did (5) in the final analysis) in considering the construction as made up of two constructibles, but which combine in one of two ways, - this seems to depart from Priscian and to correspond to Thomas's theory which divided the construction into intransitive or transitive (6), each of which

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- 1) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: de constructione et regimine casuum cum aliis partibus orationis, post dicetur.
  - 2) cf. 3.13 for a discussion of this technical term.
  - 3) Siger de Courtrai, p.131: constructio est constructibilium unio.
  - 4) cf. 5.24.
  - 5) cf. 5.233.
  - 6) cf. 5.24 and 3.13 and 3.13 for discussions of these terms.



was divided into 'constructio actuum' (1) (which corresponds to the favourite S P and verb-oblique respectively (2) types of sentence) and 'constructio personarum' (3) (which consists of an N N cluster (4), in which one member will be the dependent determinator of the other) (5). It is quite clear that Siger had in mind a similar analysis of his material (6) but without making the use of Thomas's terminology or without presenting his theory in as systematic a manner as Thomas did.

- 1) cf. 5.2411 and 5.2421.
- 2) Both Siger and Thomas use sentences such as "Socrates currit" and "lego librum" as examples of this type of construction.
- 3) cf. 5.2412 and 5.2422.
- 4) N = Nomen: again, both Siger and Thomas use examples such as "homo albus" and "cappa Socratis" to illustrate these constructions.
- 5) cf. 5.24.
- 6) Siger reaches a point which is very close to Thomas's perfectio (5.233) though he does not reach this point as the result of any systematic analysis: this is something which has to be deduced from ideas culled from his descriptions of the partes orationis and his grammatical Sophismata;  
 e.g.p.130: constructio causatur ex modis significandi:  
 p.132: ad constructionem suppositi cum apposito exigitur ex parte suppositi modus significandi per modum habitus et per modum per se entis; quia in quolibet apposito sunt duo ~~in~~ istis proportionales, scilicet, modus significandi per modum fieri, qui modo habitus proportionatur in supposito, et modum significandi per modum dependentis, qui proportionatur modo per se stantis in supposito:  
 p.153: omnis constructio congrua est per modos significandi proportionales.



Siger and Michel have, however, an additional feature in their descriptions of the partes orationis, which is absent from Thomas (1) (and perhaps even from Martin); both Siger and Michel call this 'principium constructionis' (2), and it consists of an additional statement made about each mode of signifying to the effect that the pars in question could or could not function syntactically by virtue of this or that mode of signifying, and it seems to have been a descriptive device used by Siger and Michel to classify the various modes of signifying, not only in terms of their semantic, but also in terms of their syntactic qualities, prior to giving a more detailed exposition of syntactic theory. It does not, however, amount to a theory of syntax, and the phenomenon should be considered as a preliminary or introductory aspect of a theory of syntax which we are unfortunately in no position to describe - it seems, however, safe to say that the 'principia constructionis' are only a convenient way of stating in advance which modes of signifying can be used syntactically and which Siger includes

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- 1) Thurot tells us that Michel and the other Modistae (he actually says: "Michel de Marbais et tous ceux qui ont traité de Modis significandi") classified as "principia constructionis" some of the accidental modes of signifying of the partes orationis; this is not strictly true, since Siger describes the general essential modes of the declinable partes as 'principia constructionis' in addition to certain of the accidental modes of these partes, and furthermore, Thomas makes no use at all of the term in his analysis and description of the partes orationis in the section on Etymologia: cf. also Appendix A. ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~
- 2) cf. p. 95 for discussion of this term.



as part of the description of the pars in question - Thomas scrupulously avoided doing this, though this does not mean that Thomas did not have recourse to syntactic material in his descriptions of the partes orationis (1). Siger provides many illustrations of the 'principia constructionis' (2), but little of any value is obtained for a general theoretical approach to the problem of word-classes and the description of their syntax; since Siger's examples refer to Latin syntax only. The real innovation consists of Siger's including the 'principia constructionis', i.e. syntactic criteria - which is much more formal than the semantic (3) analyses so characteristic of the Modistae - as an integral and deliberate part of his descriptive analysis of the partes orationis.

An interesting feature of Siger's description - and in this sense he seems to score over Thomas, - is his general use of the modes of signifying to introduce aspects of the

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- 1) e.g. his use of compositio as an accidental mode of the verb, cf. p.347<sup>8</sup>.
  - 2) e.g. the comparative with the nominative - Achilles est fortior quam Achilles: the genitive - mulier egregiae formae: the dative - amabilis mihi: disjunctive conjunction - Socrates vel Plato currit, etc.
  - 3) It has been pointed out on several occasions that the Modistae restated the quasi-formal categories of Priscian in more semantic terms; this does not mean that they were deliberately non-formal in their grammatical procedure, and indeed there are instances, e.g. in their treatment of the indeclinable partes orationis, that they have recourse, unconsciously it would seem, to formal criteria in their statements, and in their own eyes the Modistae were not very far removed from the more formal Priscian.



various partes which are clearly fundamental to his syntactic theory, e.g. he describes the general essential mode of the nomen as a 'principium constructionis' since it will be the suppositum (1) in opposition to the general essential mode of the verb; the verb, by virtue of its modus dependentis, will be <sup>the</sup> appositum (2), and this makes the general mode of the verb a 'principium constructionis' since it can combine with the suppositum to create a construction, but by definition, i.e. by virtue of the modus dependentis, the verb must always be the dependent constructible (3), as in "Socrates currit" (4) and in "lego librum" (5).

Siger in fact arranges all his modes of signifying in terms of 'principia constructionis'; the absolute modes cannot be 'principia constructionis' since they are purely derivational (6) items which refer to the lexical meaning of

- 1) Siger de Courtrai, pp.95-6: iste modus significandi(nominis) est principium constructionis suppositi cum appposito, quia modus significandi per modum fieri seu motus seu esse in appposito proportionatur modo significandi per modum substantiae, permanentis habitus seu entis.
- 2) Siger de Courtrai, p.108: omne verbum significat rem suam per modum significandi dependentis et per consequens nullum verbum, in quantum tale, poterit supponere verbo, immo, omne verbum requirit aliquid in ratione suppositi quod dependentiam eius sustentat.
- 3) cf. 5.24.
- 4) cf. 5.241
- 5) cf. 5.242.
- 6) A clear distinction must be made between 'derivation' in an historical sense and as a technical term in descriptive grammar - 'synchronic derivation' would be a better term in descriptive grammar since it is a way of "describing the relationship of one word to another", B.Bloch & G.L.Trager, Outline of Linguistic Analysis, p.55, and it is in the sense of 'synchronic derivation' that derivation is used with reference to the absolute and respective modes.



the mode concerned and have no relationship per se, real or potential, with the other modes of signifying as a result of being derived (1), though this does not affect the syntactic relationship of the pars in question by virtue of its other modes of signifying; but the respective modes are 'principia constructionis' which refer clearly to the grammatical meanings of the modes concerned (2) and are by definition capable of further relationships with other modes of signifying (3).

Much of Siger's syntax has perforce to be deduced from a knowledge of Thomas's syntax in view of Siger's haphazard presentation of these syntactic details (4); but this should not detract from the value of the 'principium constructionis' as a marker (at the pre-syntactic level) of a mode of signifying, by virtue of which a pars orationis may become the member of a potential construction, its exact relationship and function within the construction being decided by the proportionality of the 'principia constructionis' of the pars to the 'principia constructionis' (expressed by means of the respective modes of signifying) of the other member of the construction (5).

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1) cf. 4.243.

2) This is very similar to Bloomfield's division of grammatical forms and lexical forms, cf. L. Bloomfield, Language, p.166, and the function of the principium constructionis seems to be to act as a marker of a grammatical form.

3) cf. 4.243.

4) These are scattered throughout his 'Summa' and his 'Sophismata'.

5) Siger de Courtrai, p.131: modi significandi respectivi...sunt principium constructionis quia sunt principium unionis constructibilis cum constructibili.



Thomas, as has already been pointed out (1), deals with the partes orationis and their modes of signifying purely and simply, before beginning his section on syntax; he does in fact warn us at a very early stage (2) that this will be his procedure. Thomas's syntactic theory is quite different from that of his predecessors, and despite all the limitations of any analysis based on semantic criteria, he describes a theory which is remarkably modern and structural (3). What is also true (and it may be this fact which induced Thurot to say (4) that no grammarian of the Middle Ages appears to have made a systematic and a priori division of syntax) is that Thomas's syntactic theory is not normative, nor does it seem to have been made even with ~~the~~ grammatical instruction in Latin in mind (5). This, of course, is entirely in keeping with Modistic theory and practice; they may have been teachers but they were teachers of grammar, not teachers of Latin (6), and their purpose was to speculate on the nature of grammar.

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1) cf. p. 211.

2) In fact at the end of his preamble before he begins his description of Etymologia and the partes orationis, cf. fn. 2, p. 180.

3) cf. Chapter VI for the relevance of Modistic theory to modern theories.

4) Ch. Thurot, *Op.cit.*, p. 237.

5) cf. H. Roos, *Op.cit.*, p. 151.

6) There is a modern ring to this, because the structural linguist and the teacher of languages, though they are both dealing with language, do not by any means have always the same end in view.



Thomas, therefore, sets out a description of the partes orationis with an occasional remark in the direction of syntax, viz. his description of 'compositio' in the verb (1), and then a section on syntax which he divides into four parts, i.e. principia construendi, constructio, congruitas, and perfectio which will be discussed in more detail in the next three sections (2): this too is the method of analysis adopted by Martin.

## 5.22 Principia construendi.

Thomas analyses syntax as a series of stages (passiones sermonis) which are necessary before any complete statement can be made. With this in mind, Thomas produces a most important section as a preamble to his description of a syntax, a section which is full of interesting implications for the analysis of any construction and of any complete statement (constructio perfecta), since it contains procedures which can be applied to the analysis either of any construction or its members, i.e. the construct<sup>u</sup>ibles (constructibilia) or of the complete construction.

This section he calls the principles of construing (principia construendi), which are based clearly enough on Aristotle's four causes, i.e. material, formal, efficient and final. It will be seen (3) that these four causes can be

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1) cf. 5.1122, pp.

2) cf. 5.22: 5.23: 5.24.

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #184: applicare eos ad constructionem, congruitatem, et perfectionem, ostendendo qui modi significandi, quarum constructionum, congruitatum, perfectionum, sunt principia.



applied to the analysis of any construction and also to the analysis of the process of construction (constructio), concord (congruitas) and completion (perfectio); it also means that the first two causes refer acutely to the nature of the partes orationis which make up the constructible elements of a construction. It must be remembered that the dictio and the pars orationis are the same materially but differ formally (1); the dictio and the pars orationis refer to the same thing materially, but differ formally since the pars orationis possesses the mode of signifying (2), and it is this consignification, predicated as it is to the material, which gives the pars orationis its grammatical power, and similarly but on a different level the constructible is a prior constituent of a construction, but in itself has no syntactic function, i.e. it is the potentiality of the actuality of a construction.

We shall see then that various grammatical constituents can be stated in terms parallel to the dichotomy of matter

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, //4: rationem significandi...per quas efficitur signum...et sic formaliter est dictio; et rationem consignificandi...et sic formaliter est pars orationis.  
 2) cf. 3.11, p. 74-6; this list does not, however, exhaust the number of oppositions based on the matter-form contrast.



and form (1) thus:-

	<u>materia</u>	<u>forma</u>
dictio	vox	ratio significandi
pars orationis	vox	ratio consignificandi
modus essentialis	generalis	specificus
nomen	modus entis	determinata apprehensio
verbum	modus esse	distantia
participium	modus esse	indistantia
adverbium	modus dispon- entis	modus determinantis actum
principia construendi	principium materiale	principium formale
constructio	constructibilia	unio constructibilium

The principium materiale thus refers to the dictio and the principium formale to the pars orationis, i.e. the material refers to the constructibles but this is meaningless except that any dictio can have the potentiality of becoming a pars orationis when it acquires the potentiality of consignification (2), which brings us to the various forms of a pars orationis which result from the totality of its essence and accidents. We are still pre-syntactic, and a further process of selection is necessary before we can be said to be dealing with syntactic units; and this is done by the principium efficiens which represents those modes of signifying which, along with the proper concord, i.e. by means of 'similitudo' and 'proportio' (3), though the process is not complete until the construction can express a compound concept of the mind.

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- 1) cf. 3.11, p.71-4; this list does not however, exhaust the number of oppositions based on the matter-form contrast.  
 2) cf. 3.11, p.80-2, for the use of this term.  
 3) cf. 3.13, p.99-101.



This is the procedure for any construction, but is also the procedure for the whole of syntax as set out by Thomas. The principium materiale refers to the individual constructibles which have no syntactic functions in that they have as yet no being, no syntactic existence: this is the purpose of the principium formale, i.e. to give form to the construction which means therefore the combination of the two constructibles. The principium efficiens corresponds to those respective modes of signifying of the constructibles which will become the modus dependentis and the modus terminantis and 'effect' the construction by preparing and arranging the constructibles (to which they belong as modes of signifying (1)) in the construction so that the combination may become concordant. Lastly the principium finale represents the last stage, since its purpose is the expression of a compound concept of the mind which can be achieved only by a proper combination of constructibles.

We can thus see a three-fold relationship between the four causes, the members of the construction and the different speech levels:

principium materiale	- constructibilia	- Etymologia
principium formale	- unio constructibilium	- Constructio
principium efficiens	- unio congrua constructibilium	- Congruitas
principium finale	- expressio mentis conceptus compositi	- Perfectio

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, #187: dicuntur modi significandi principium intrinsecum, quasi inter constructibilia manentes.



5.221 Principium materiale.

The principium materiale represents the constructibles; the relationship between the constructible and the constructio is identical to that of substance and accident; an accident exists as a modification of a substance or thing and is predicated of a substance, and so the constructibles will be the substance of the constructio, or stated otherwise, the constructio represents an accidental change in the constructible (1). This means that the constructio, which consists of two constructibles, will consist largely of the subject - predicate type, which is caused by the dependence of one constructible on the other; the dependent member must be either dependent i.e. a constructible which governs, or a determinant, and so a constructio will be made up of a dependent and a terminant constructible (2).

Thomas makes an interesting observation, which is very revealing in terms of modern syntactic analysis, i.e. that it would be mistaken to consider the construction "homo albus currit bene" to be just one construction, the reason being the different dependences in it, i.e. i) the dependence of the adiectivum on the substantivum, ii) the verbum on the suppositum, iii) the determinant on the determinable (3), so that we can analyse this construction into:-

homo albus currit bene

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~¶~~185: subiectum est materia accidentis, nam accidens non habet materiam ex qua, sed in qua; ergo constructibilia sunt materia constructionis.  
 2) cf. 3.13 and 5.23 for a more detailed discussion of these terms.  
 3) cf. p. 96.



This suggests, apart from anything else, that the term *constructio* can be used both to mean a construction in the modern sense of immediate constituent, and also to mean a construction, better described in Modistic terms as '*constructio perfecta*'. Similarly the construction "*Socrates percutit Platonem*" consists of more than one *constructio* in view of the dependence of the verb on the pre-posed *suppositum* and the dependence of the verb on the post-posed oblique form (1).

#### 5.222 Principium formale.

This represents the form of the construction, i.e. the actual combination of the constructibles (2). Once more we find the dichotomy of form and matter being introduced as criteria for a grammatical definition. The mediaeval philosopher made use of Aristotle's divisions of form and matter, act and potency, substance and accident, and the Modistae made extensive use of these terms to describe a number of binary oppositions which they used at different stages of the grammatical description; this was discussed at greater length in Chapter III (3.11). The form gives existence or actuality to the matter of the thing under consideration, and similarly, therefore, the potential *constructio*, at its material stage (*principium materiale*), is actualised into a combination of constructibles by means of the form, i.e. the *principium formale* (3).

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1) cf. 3.13 and 5.23

2) cf. p.523

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #186: *constructio habet esse per constructibilium unionem; ergo constructibilium unio est forma constructionis.*



Form has nothing to do with outward shape, but is "an immanent constitutive principle of activity"(1), which informs or determines a thing, in this case the constructio, and thereby makes of the potential construction a particular type of construction. So then, the principium materiale might be said to be the potential constructio, upon which the principium formale bestows form and thereby represents the potentiality of a proper congruent construction which will then be realised by the other two principles.

In an earlier chapter (2) the relationship between matter and form, and act and potentiality was discussed, and it was seen that form becomes the realisation of the matter's potentialities (3). The mediaeval metaphysician conceived of reality as a hierarchy, the levels of which consist of the material element potentially informable as an act so as to become the matter of the next level (4); the Modistae conceived of a similar hierarchy of grammar, which has already been suggested, rather imperfectly (5). The step from the principium formale to the principium efficiens represents an important step for the grammarian; the principium materiale, as we have seen (6), and the principium formale deal directly with the partes orationis, and more particularly, with the modes of signifying which constitute the partes orationis. So far, the grammarian has been dealing with features of language,

1) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.86.

2) cf. 3.11

3) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.93: first matter, considered in abstraction, is pure potentiality for successive actualisation by substantial forms, each of which stands to its matter as act to potentiality, actualising the matter's potentiality.

4) F.C.Copleston, Op.cit., p.95

5) by means of the diagram, p. 614.

6) cf. p. 524-5.



which, in Modistic terms, have correlates in reality (1), but with the principium efficiens and the principium finale, the grammarian is handling the modes of signifying, not according to the dictates of reality, but according to the more grammatical requirements of 'congruitas' (2) and 'perfectio' (3).

#### 5.223 Principium efficiens.

This is the realisation of the construction, and two factors are involved which Thomas called 'intrinsicum' and 'extrinsicum', the first representing a permanent and internal relationship and the last being an external, i.e. mental factor. The principium intrinsicum represents the process of selection which started with the raw material of the principium materiale and continued with the potential nature of the principium formale; the principium extrinsicum represents the respective modes of signifying by virtue of which one constructible either depends on the other, or determines the dependence of the other (4). As a result of these modes of signifying two general modes can be abstracted which serve to decide the internal relationships of every constructio; these are the mode of being dependent (modus dependendi) and the mode of terminating the dependence (modus dependentiam terminans). Every constructio

1) cf. 3.0.

2) cf. 3.13 and 5.232 for this term

3) cf. 5.233 for this term

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #187: intrinsicum sunt modi significandi respectivi, ratione quorum vel unum constructibile est ad alterum dependens, vel alterius dependentiam terminans.



contains two constructibles, one being the dependent and the other the determinant<sup>a</sup> (1), and the nature of the constructio, i.e. transitive or intransitive (2), will decide which will be the dependent or terminant, though by definition (3), the transitive or intransitive nature of the construction is decided, in part at least, by means of the modes of signifying of the dependent constructible, and additional factors can often help to establish the dependent and terminant constructibles (4). If, as has been suggested (5), the stage has been reached in the grammatical hierarchy when the dictates of reality no longer control the modes of signifying, this does not detract from the prime importance of the modes of signifying, and the control, so to speak, of the modes of signifying in the relationship between the dependent and the terminant constructibles is now ordered according to the requirements of the 'congruitas' of a 'constructio perfecta' (6).

These modes of signifying create in effect the constructio, since they prepare and arrange the constructibles for the actual

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #185: unius constructionis non sunt nisi duo constructibilia principalia, scilicet: dependens, et terminans.
  - 2) cf. p. 91-3 .
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #192: constructio intransitiva est constructio in qua secundum constructibile, per suos modos significandi, dependet ad primum. (my italics).
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: illud constructibile est dependens, quod ratione alicuius modi significandi tantum petit vel exigit.
  - 5) cf. p. 90-1 .
  - 6) cf. 3.13, p. 97 : also 5.232 and 5.233.



combination, which will account for their internal relationships(1). The act of combination is performed by the mind which is the external factor in any constructio; this is the principium extrinsecum. The constructio has, with this stage, come into being, and there remains only the principium finale which states the end or result attained by the construction.

#### 5.224. Principium finale.

The aim of the constructio perfecta is to express a compound concept of the mind; this principium really represents then the sum total of the other principia which combine together to express a mental concept, i.e. it becomes a composite realisation of the constructibiles, their combination, their modes of signifying, and the mind which fuses them together, and the mental concept which caused them and the mental concept they express.

#### 5.23 Passiones sermonis.

Hitherto, we have been dealing with individual partes orationis and their different modes of signifying; now we deal with the combinations of these partes orationis by virtue of selected modes of signifying, i.e. the respective modes of signifying. The constructio perfecta is achieved by a chain of factors, starting with the constructibiles themselves; (it would seem that Siger had felt it very necessary to indicate

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, //187: hi modi significandi dicuntur efficere constructionem, pro tanto, quia praeeparant et disponunt constructibilia ad actualem unionem, quae fit per intellectum;...est intellectus qui constructibilia per modos significandi disposita et praeeparata actu unit in constructione et sermone.



separately, when describing the partes orationis and their modes of signifying, those aspects of a particular pars which would have the further function of being constructible at a higher level than that of the word) (1). Moving on from the word, we find three stages or levels (passiones) of language, which can be described as the combination of constructibles (constructio), the concord of such combinations (congruitas), and the final completed construction (perfectio); this last must, by definition (2), contain a verb, since 'distantia' is a criterion for the essential mode of the verbum (3), which accounts perhaps for the insistence on the constructio being of the favourite sentence types of NV, i.e. ~~nomen~~-verb (subject and predicate (4)) and VN, i.e. verb and oblique-nominal. We shall see that both these sentence types are described in terms which <sup>are</sup> to a very large extent formal, but, and this is of course entirely in keeping with the intellectual spirit of the age, they are based, for their very form, on criteria which are metaphysical rather than grammatical.

Constructio is quite clearly more important than congruitas and the constructio must be established before any statement about its concord can be made. Both these stages must be

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- 1) i.e. by describing each mode of signifying which has this function as a 'principium constructionis', p. 515.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, P.225: cum constructio perfecta sit ad exprimendum mentis conceptum compositum secundum distantiam... haec distantia solum est inter suppositum et appositum, ex hoc quod solum verbum est appositum, quod per modum distantis se habet.
  - 3) cf. 5.131.
  - 4) The Noun-Verb(SP) is the traditional complete sentence and goes as far back in grammatical history as the Greek grammarians.



passed before the final completed construction is achieved.

Thomas proceeds to describe, first of all, the constructio which he does first by means of definition, and then by analysing the different types of construction and their concords (1); he then describes the feature of congruitas as such, and finally perfectio as the final stage of his syntax.

#### 5.231 Constructio per definitionem.

There are two ways of knowing a thing, i.e. by definition or by division, e.e. the classification of the thing into its various species - in the case of the construction, into the various types of construction. By definition, a thing is known in accordance with its essence, and by division, a thing is known by its potentiality (2). By definition, therefore, we know a thing as it is, and so by definition, a construction is the combination of constructibles, created by the mind from the modes of signifying, for the expression of a compound concept of the mind (3).

Such a definition states in effect the four causes which, by definition, produce the object, in this case, the constructio; thus the constructibles refer to the principium materiale, and the combination of the constructibles to the principium formale: the modes of signifying refer to the principium efficiens intrinsecum and the action of the mind to

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- 1) The Modistae use 'concord' much more extensively than modern grammarians; indeed, it has already been suggested (cf. p.97), that 'congruitas' is a general term for different kinds of grammatical relationships, e.g. government, concord, collocation, etc.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, p.189: per definitionem, qua res cognoscitur secundum sui esse; et per divisionem, qua res cognoscitur secundum sui posse.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, p.189: constructio est constructibilium unio, ex modis significandi, et intellectus causata, ad exprimendum mentis conceptum compositum finaliter adinventum.



the principium efficiens extrinsecum, and the expression of a compound concept refers to the principium finale.

5.232. Congruitas.

It was suggested (1) that Thomas's syntactic theory consists of three stages; the final stage, which he called 'perfectio', is the achievement of a complete construction (constructio perfecta), the purpose of which is to create a perfect understanding in the mind of the hearer (2). The first stage, which has just been discussed is the constructio, which takes the various partes orationis as they have been described in terms of their modes of signifying (3), and combines these partes orationis or constructibiles together as a first step towards the complete construction. Thomas's method of exposition is to describe, first the various types of construction and the concord of each construction (4), and then the theory of concord (congruitas) as it applies to the whole of syntax, since it is clearly not enough to throw together any two constructibiles. There are three basic requirements for this concord, which Thomas describes in more detail, and only then is the last stage, i.e. perfectio, reached, and this is the expression of a complete sentence (5) by means of the

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1) cf. 5.22.

2) cf. p.540.

3) cf. p.558-9: 561-4: 566-8: 568-9.

4) cf. 5.24

5) Thomas follows Priscian closely in his definition of a 'constructio perfecta'.



proper combination of the modes signifying, which will create perfect understanding in the mind of the hearer (1).

Congruitas, therefore, is the next step beyond constructio, which was defined as a combination of constructibles created, in terms of their modes of signifying, in order to express a mental concept (2); it is not enough, as we have said, to combine just any two constructibles, but it must be a combination which satisfies three requirements: (a) the conformity of all the modes of signifying involved (3), (b) the collocation (4) of the constructibles as required by the context of the situation (5), (c) the concord and government which must exist between the constructibles (6). Congruitas is thus the proper combination of the constructibles by means of the conformity, i.e. mutual appropriateness of the modes of signifying required for any kind of construction (7).

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #223: generare perfectum sensum in animo auditoris.
  - 2) cf. p.531.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #218: congruitas et incongruitas causantur ex conformitate vel disconformitate modorum significandi.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #218: proprietas vel improprietas sermonis causatur ex convenientis vel repugnantia significatorum specialium. Collocation and context of situation are technical terms in Professor J.R. Firth's and 'London' theory, cf. J.R. Firth, Papers in Linguistics.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: conformitas modorum significandi sit principium constructionis et congruitas, distinguendum est de conformitate, quia duplex est conformitas, scilicet: proportionis et similitudinis.
  - 6) Thomas of Erfurt, #221: congruitas nihil aliud est, quam partium sermonis debita unio, ex modorum significandi conformitate ad aliquam speciem constructionis requisitorum derelicta.
  - 7) cf. p.97



The first two requirements are very closely linked, since they are concerned with the proper combination of the constructibles, and this can be achieved by reason of the concord or more negatively, the non-discord of the meanings of the constructibles, or by reason of the symmetry, or more negatively, the dissimilarity of the modes of signifying (1). The meanings and the modes of signifying of the constructibles are inextricably inter-woven, though it would be a mistake, as Thomas himself argues (2), not to regard them as separate entities, otherwise it would be enough, and this Thomas strenuously denies (3), to say that a construction is or is not 'congruent' by virtue of the accord or disaccord of the meaning of the constructibles - this, Thomas maintains, comes really within the province of the logician and in itself is not enough to create the concord of a sentence (4).

There are in fact two things involved here; one is the concord or non-concord of a sentence (5), and the other is the propriety or impropriety of the sentence which stems from the

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~218~~: debita unio potest contingere dupliciter: uno modo ex convenientia significatorum specialium; et per oppositum unio indebita ex repugnantia ipsorum. Alio modo ..ex conformitate modorum significandi, et per oppositum indebita modorum significandi discrepantia.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~218~~: quidam, non distinguentes inter significatorum specialium convenientiam vel repugnantiam, et modorum significandi conformitatem vel discrepantiam.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~218~~: quidam..dixerunt omnem constructionem esse congruam vel incongruam, in qua est significatorum specialium convenientia vel repugnantia. - Sed hoc <sup>non</sup> valet.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~218~~: congruitas sit de consideratione grammatici per se. Sed convenientia vel repugnantia significatorum specialium a grammatico per se non consideratur, sed magis a logico: ergo congruitas in sermone ab his non causatur.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~218~~: haec est congrua et propria, 'cappa nigra'.



accord or non-accord of the members of the sentence: in "cappa nigra" we have, what Thomas calls, concord and propriety but in "cappa categorica" we have what he calls concord but not propriety. Stated more linguistically, we can say that we are dealing with concord at two levels: in the case of "cappa categorica" we may have the internal concord of gender, number, etc., and Thomas might well describe this as an intransitive 'constructio personarum' (1). But in such a construction, we have quite clearly not taken into account the collocability of these constructibles, which requires that the context of situation be taken into account (2), though Thomas of course would not have described it in such terms, but rather with reference purely and simply to the meanings of the two constituents, i.e. though there may be concord between them, there is no propriety (proprietas) because of their meanings, and therefore we require both concord (congruitas) and proper collocation (proprietas) before we can say that the completed construction has been achieved. It would be reasonable to maintain that this is why Thomas discusses under his general consideration of the different types of construction, the 'congruitas' of each type of construction (3), and then discusses 'congruitas' as an independent syntactic feature, i.e. by reason of this feature we have first, internal concord and then the external concord of

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1) cf. 5.2412.

2) cf. J.R.Firth, *Papers in Linguistics*, for the use of these terms.

3) cf. 5.2411, 5.2412, 5.2421 and 5.2422.



the sentence as a whole which controls the collocations of its members. It seems that 'proprietas' acts here as an indirect structural marker <sup>at a different level</sup> which congruitas serves to complement and thereby complete the construction.

The requirement of conformity of all the modes of signifying, which is closely connected to the collocations of the members of a construction, raises the problem of the terminant member of a transitive (1) construction, since this terminant constructible may itself be potentially the dependent member of another construction (2), viz. the function of 'librum' in the constructions "lego librum" and "lego librum Virgilii"; in a case such as this, it is not necessary for the constructible which is the terminant in the first construction, i.e. 'librum' in "lego librum", to be considered in terms of its possible dependence on another terminant constructible of another construction which, though it may stand outside the first construction, is in effect an expansion of the first construction. In the construction "lego librum", 'lego' is the dependent and 'librum' the terminant constructible, but in the case of "lego librum" and "librum Virgilii" in which 'librum', which was the terminant of 'lego', has also become the dependent of 'Virgilii', ~~and~~ Thomas states that as far as the congruence of "lego librum"

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- 1) cf. 3.13 for a discussion of the use by the Modistae of terms such as 'transitivus' and 'intransitivus'.
  - 2) cf. 5.24. Thomas of Erfurt, #219: constructibile dependens sit terminatum per constructibile terminans.



is concerned, no notice need be taken of the possible relationship between 'librum' and 'Virgilii' (1).

The third requirement is a very important one and represents one of the features that Wackernagel noted (2) as one of the valuable contributions of mediaeval grammatical descriptive technique to the theory of syntax. There are two kinds of grammatical agreement, i.e. government and concord (3): the Modistae and other mediaeval grammarians recognised this, and as a result the Modistae stipulated that the conformity of the modes of signifying, which has just been discussed, will be one of two kinds, i.e. complementary syntactical arrangement (*proportio*) or modal uniformity (*similitudo*) (4), which are discrete and mutually exclusive. This division derives from the nature of the relationship between the modes of signifying of the constructibles; it will happen that the dependent constructible may possess certain modes of signifying which do not belong to it, i.e. which do not derive from its own properties but which derive from the properties of the terminant constructible of which it is the dependent - and in such a case the conformity

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #219: si habeat dependentiam ad diversas constructiones, non requiritur quod omnes dependentiae sint semper actu terminatae, sed sufficit quod secundum unam constructionem terminentur, ut.. 'lego librum', haec est congrua, licet non addatur Virgilii, vel aliquid aliud, quod terminet dependentiam huius, quod est 'librum', secundum quam dependet a parte post.
  - 2) J. Wackernagel, *Op.cit.*, p.23.
  - 3) cf. the discussions of these terms, pp. 99-101.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: quandoque utraque ad constructionem requiritur quandoque autem sufficit proportionis tantum, quandoque autem sufficit similitudinis conformitas tantum.



will be one of 'similitudo', what we would call concord, as in a construction consisting of an adjective and a substantive or in a construction consisting of a suppositum in the nominative case with a personal verb (1). The adjective acquires gender, number, person, etc. not from its own properties, but from the properties of the substantive to which it is attributed in an endocentric phrase (2), so that the substantive requires the modes of concord and not of government in order to produce a congruant construction (3), i.e. one in which one constructible will show the same features as the other constructible; similarly the personal verb acquires its number and person from its suppositum (4), so that the relationship between them will, in this instance, be one of 'similitudo' and not 'proportio'.

If, on the other hand, the constituent members of a construction possess certain modes of signifying which derive from their own properties and are not acquired from the properties of the other member, i.e. the dependent constructible possesses these properties in and of itself and does not derive them from

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: constructibile terminans debet habere modos significandi constructibilis dependentis, ut patet de constructione adiectivi cum substantivo, et in constructione suppositi nominativi casus cum verbo personali.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: adiectivum habet tam genus, quam numerum, quam personam ex proprietatibus rei subiectae..unde ex parte substantivi non requirit modos proportionabiles sed similes.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: constructibile dependens habet aliquos modos significandi, non ex proprietatibus suae rei per se, sed ex proprietatibus rei constructibilis terminantis: et tunc inter illos modos significandi exigitur similitudo, et non proportio.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: verbum personale habet numerum, et personam, ex proprietatibus rei suppositae; ideo hos modos requirit in supposito, non proportionabiles, sed similes.



the terminant constructible (1), the relationship will be one of proportionality (*proportio*), as in the case of the adjective which possesses in its own right and from its own properties the *modus adiacentis*; it will therefore demand the *modus per se stantis* in the substantive (2), with which it will combine to form a construction, i.e. they will thus be syntactically complementary in any syntagm. Such a relationship in this particular instance, is not so much one of government, but represents in fact the constituent class of the constructibles.

Congruitas is thus achieved by means of the conformity of the modes of signifying of the constituents of a construction, and by the collocations of these constituents; the conformity of the modes of signifying is closely linked to the collocations of the partes which make up the construction, since there will be clearly no collocation in an instance such as "*cappa categorica*", so that the congruitas of a construction requires class-collocation as well as semantic collocation in addition to concord between the members of a construction. In Modistic terms, we can say that congruitas demands the proper combination (*unio debita*) of constructibles, propriety of

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: si constructibile dependens habet aliquos modos significandi ex proprietatibus suae rei per se, et non ex proprietatibus rei constructibilis terminantis, tunc exigitur in illis modis significandi proportio, et non similitudo.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #220: quia adiectivum habet modum adiacentis proprie et de proprietatibus suae rei, ideo per huiusmodi modum adiacentis requirit in subiecto modum per se stantis, qui est sibi proportionabilis.



meaning (1), and mutual appropriateness of the modes of signifying, i.e. congruitas becomes, therefore, a combination, in effect, of the 'similitudo' and 'proportio' of the modes signifying of the constructible members of a construction (2).

### 5.233 Perfectio.

This is the third stage in Modistic syntax; constructio, as we have seen, is the combination of constructibles and congruitas is the 'congruence' of such a combination, all of which is required for the expression of a mental concept, and in order to complete the process, 'perfectio' represents the last stage which produces the complete construction or sentence by means of a proper, i.e. 'congruent' combination of constructibles which will express a mental concept in the form of a favourite sentence-type of Latin and create perfect understanding in the mind of the hearer (3). The term 'favourite sentence-type' is used, since Thomas states as the first requirement for a complete construction the presence of <sup>a</sup>suppositum and appositum (4), which means that separation (distantia),—one of the principal and most characteristic features of the verb was 'distantia', which both Thomas and

1) cf. p. 534-5.

2) cf. p. 537-8: fn. 4, p. 537: fns. 2-4, p. 538

3) Thomas of Erfurt, #227: passio sermonis tertia et ultima, ex debita constructibilium unione derelicta, cum sufficientia exprimendi mentis conceptum compositum secundum distantiam et generandi perfectam sententiam in animo auditoris.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #224: perfectio acquiritur ex constructibilium unione debita, non quorumcumque, sed suppositi cum apposito.



Siger defined as an essential mode of the verb (1), - becomes an essential ingredient in the expression of a complete mental concept, which can therefore be done only by means of an SP construction. This is, of course, a tradition which goes back at least as far as Apollonius but it is interesting to see that the philosophical and logical training of the Modistae made them, without realising it, create a syntax which is in actual fact based on the favourite sentence-type of Latin; their motive was the expression of substance which must somehow be in a state of flux (2), hence the requirement of suppositum and appositum, and yet it was ultimately the structure of their language which forced them to this (3).

There are, therefore, two aims to every complete construction - Thomas expressed them by means of 'propinquus' and 'remotus'; the primary one (finis propinquus) is the expression of a composite mental concept by means of a verb (4). It is not enough to state it as the expression of a mental concept since this can be done without the verb (secundum indistantiam) as in the case of "homo albus", but this is

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1) cf. 5.1121

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #113: huic modo verbi, qui est modus esse et successionis, proportionatur in supposito et in obliquo modus entis, id est, modus habitus permanentis, cf. also p. 218.

3) cf. p. 508-11.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #223: finis propinquus est expressio mentis conceptus compositi, secundum distantiam.



incomplete, and therefore the mental concept must be expressed by means of a construction containing a verb as in "homo est albus" (1), since the secondary aim (*finis remotus*) of any construction is to create perfect understanding in the mind of the hearer which can only be done by means of the proper combination of constructibles (2), which must by definition contain a verb (3).

It means, then, that in any complete construction there must be three necessary conditions before the construction can be said to be complete, and this shows clearly the progression involved in these stages of *constructio*, *congruitas* and *perfectio*; *constructio* stipulates two constructibles as necessary members of a construction, but *congruitas* requires that these constituent members should show not only grammatical but collocational concord; *perfectio* demands, when these requirements have been satisfied, that the two members must be the *suppositum* and *appositum*, otherwise the construction is not perfect (4). In other words, a construction such as "homo albus" demonstrates the proper concords but is incomplete since

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #223: *alloquin conceptus mentis est compositus secundum distantiam, ut componendo/hominem 'cum 'albo', mediante copula, dicendo, "homo est albus".*
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #223: *finis remotus constructionis est generare perfectum sensum in animo auditoris, ex constructibilium debita unione.*
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #225: *haec distantia solum est inter suppositum et appositum, ex hoc quod solum verbum est appositum, quod per modum distantis se habet.*
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #225: *constructio perfecta sit ad exprimendum mentis conceptum compositum secundum distantiam finaliter ordinata, oportet quod sicut est distantia inter conceptus mentis compositos, sic etiam sit distantia in constructibilium unione.*



it does not contain a verb. We have thus two of the conditions necessary for a complete construction, ~~2a~~ conformity and congruence of all the modes of signifying and a combination of suppositum and appositum.

The third condition is a very necessary addition to the other two conditions, since it is not enough, if we are to achieve the aim of every complete construction, to have concord of the combination of suppositum and appositum, but in addition, every dependence must be completed: Thomas explains (1) that in every construction, one member will be a dependent constructible and the other will be the terminant, so that if we are to complete the construction, the dependence of the dependent constructible must be completed, since otherwise the complete expression of the mental concept will not be possible (2). A construction such as "si Socrates currit", is incomplete, because the constructible "si", added to the construction "Socrates currit" introduces a new dependence, i.e. its own dependence on something outside this particular construction which will remain incomplete, until this dependence is completed by something which is, presumably, consequential to this

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1) cf. p. 96.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, #225: requiritur ex parte constructionis, quod nulla dependentia sit non terminata, quae retrahat ipsam ab eius fine, qui est mentis conceptum compositum exprimere, et perfectum sensum in animo auditoris generare.

3) This "constructio imperfecta", i.e. "si Socrates currit", is a subordinating conjunction; this is the only example that Thomas gives of a subordinating conjunction - indeed he does not state specifically that it is either a subordinating construction or conjunction; reasons have been given elsewhere, cf. p. 468, why Thomas, for extra-linguistic reasons, did not include the subordinating constructions and conjunctions in his grammatical statement.



incomplete construction (1). Perfectio becomes thus the expression, in purely notional terms, of the possibility of silence and the end of a grammatical structure, i.e. one with no external syntactic relations and therefore a complete sentence.

The result of these three stages of constructio, congruitas and perfectio is that in the 'constructio' we have the bare bones of a sentence made up of a combination of two constructibles, and it becomes the function of 'congruitas' to 'supervise' such a combination, since factors other than internal concord have to be taken into consideration - as Thomas points out (2) "cappa nigra" is a congruant construction because of its internal concord of gender, number, case etc. and its correct collocation, whereas "cappa categorica" is not, in view of its incorrect collocation. The third stage which produces a complete construction which is therefore capable of creating perfect understanding in the mind of the hearer is the result of 'perfectio' (3), which ensures that the requirements for 'congruitas' are satisfied and then imposes its own requirements, i.e. that a 'constructio perfecta' must

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #227: ista coniunctio, 'si', huic constructioni addita, "Socrates currit", facit in ea novam dependentiam ad aliquid extra se, ut ad aliquid extra se, ut ad aliquid consequens, quod si non exprimatur, semper imperfecta manebit.
  - 2) cf. p. 535.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #229: perfectio requirit constructibilium unionem, non quorumcumque, sed solum supposit cum apposito, ex conformitate omnium modorum significandi causatam, cum sufficientia exprimendi mentis conceptum compositum secundum distantiam, et generandi perfectum sensum in animo auditoris.



contain a suppositum and an oppositum, i.e. it must contain a verb, and that no dependent constructible should be left incomplete (non terminata) (1), as in the case of the constructio "si Socrates currit", since the addition of the constructible "si" to the construction "Socrates currit" creates a new dependence, which as it stands in this construction "si Socrates currit", is incomplete and therefore the whole construction is imperfect. Thus Thomas seeks to achieve a complete construction, by means of the three stages of constructio, congruitas and perfectio, with which to express a complete mental concept and at the same time create perfect understanding in the mind of the hearer.

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #227: constructio habens suppositum et appositum secundum conformitatem omnium modorum significandi, tamen nullam habens circa se dependentiam non terminatam, non retrahentem ipsam ab eius fine, est perfecta.



5.24 Constructio per divisionem.

The definition of constructio given in 5.231 refers to the totality of a construction; in fact, constructio, as defined by Thomas, seems to imply the description of constructio which has already been suggested in the section on the 'principia construendi' as a "significant group of words", whereas the division of constructio points to the classification of each construction as an Immediate Constituent made up of two constructibles. Constructio can be divided in the first place into transitive and intransitive (1); each of these constructions is further divided into 'actuum' and 'personarum', and the whole structure is shown in the diagram in Appendix C.(2).

Every constructio consists of two constructibles; this was undoubtedly a scheme inherited from a representation of Scholastic dualism in which we can find a series of dichotomies which derive from scholastic metaphysical theories of reality, i.e. substance-accidence, form-matter, act-potentiality (3); this conception of reality, coupled with the syntactic theories the Modistae inherited from their Greek and Roman predecessors, has been projected, particularly by Thomas (4), into a conception of syntax

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- 1) Thomas's definition of transitive and intransitive are quite different from those given in traditional and ~~not~~ normative grammars; this has been discussed at greater length, cf. 3.13, p. 91-4.
  - 2) cf. p. ~~660~~ 660-2.
  - 3) The use of these terms in Modistic grammatical theory has been discussed at greater length in the chapter dealing with the grammatical theories of the Modistae; cf. in particular, 3.11.
  - 4) This whole discussion of 'constructio' is based entirely on Thomas's work; all the others, e.g. Siger de Courtrai and Martin of Dacia, are incomplete insofar as syntax is concerned.



as a series of favourite sentence type propositions such as subject-predicate and verb-nominal oblique, or as a series of minor combinations consisting of the determinable element and its determination.

Thomas's theory of syntax consists, as we have seen, of the three stages of constructio, congruitas and perfectio. His conception of constructio consists of a series of two-member constructions; in each of these constructions one member will be the dependent member<sup>1</sup> and the other the terminant. This establishes the first essential division in his system of constructions; if the first constructible is the terminant and the second member therefore the dependent, we have an intransitive construction<sup>2</sup>, and a transitive construction will have the first member as the dependent and the second as the terminant member<sup>3</sup>.

Each basic type of construction can be divided into two kinds, i.e. actuum and personarum. In any construction, therefore, there are two constituents or constructibles only; in all constructions, one constructible will be the terminant and the other the

- 1) cf. 3.13 for a discussion of this term 'dependentia'.
- 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #192: constructio intransitiva est constructio, in qua secundum constructibile, per suos modos significandi, dependet a<sup>1</sup> primum; ut dicendo, Socrates currit.
- 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #192: constructio transitiva est in qua primum constructibile, per suos modos significandi, dependet ad secundum, secundo per eius dependentiam a primo recedente, si dependens fuerit ... ut dicendo, percutio Socratem.



dependent,<sup>1</sup> and in the case of the intransitive personarum construction this relationship is more specific and consists of determinant and determinable.<sup>2</sup> The first constructible is defined as the one that depends on the oblique, and the second as the one that depends on the suppositum:<sup>3</sup> in a determinant-determinable relationship, however, the determinant is always the second constructible<sup>4</sup> but this is not a matter of word-order - the determinant is logically the second constructible, i.e. in "homo albus" or "omnis homo", 'albus' and 'omnis' are the determinant constructibles and are the 'second' constructible since there must be a 'man' before he can be described as a 'white' (etc.) man: the constructible that depends on the suppositum depends on the principium and the constructible that depends on the oblique is said to depend on the terminus.<sup>5</sup> The use of the terms 'principium' and 'terminus' refers clearly to the use of the terms as criteria

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- 1) Thomas insists on the importance and function of the order of the constructibles, i.e. an intransitive construction consists of a first member which will be the terminant and a second which will be the dependent, and a transitive construction consists of a first member which will be the dependent and a second which will be the terminant. Word order must therefore be considered as fairly fixed and to be used in syntactic analysis. This applies in the 'major', i.e. NV and VN constructions, but in the minor construction of 'intransitiva personarum' word-order is not at issue, for, as was explained ~~above~~ <sup>below</sup>, 'second' in this context means 'logically second' and carries no suggestion of word order.
  - 2) cf. p.96-7: 559-64.
  - 3) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: constructibile primum, quod post se dependet ad obliquum; illud vero secundum, quod ante se dependet ad suppositum.
  - 4) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: illud est secundum, quod dependet ad determinabile.
  - 5) Thomas of Erfurt, #191: quod post se dependet ad obliquum, dependet ad ipsum ut ad terminum et ultimum; quod ante se dependet ad suppositum dependet ad ipsum ut ad principium et ad primum.



in the cases of the nomen,<sup>1</sup> and confirm that word order was looked upon by Thomas as fundamentally functional. These relationships of first and second constructible, principium and terminus, etc., can be represented schematically thus:

	<u>Constructibile primum.</u>		<u>Constructibile secundum.</u>	
Intransitiva actuum	Socrates	(principium) (terminant)	currit	(dependent)
Intransitiva personarum	Socrates	(determinable) (terminant)	albus	(determinant) (dependent)
Intransitiva personarum	currit	(determinable) (terminant)	bene	(determinant) (dependent)
Transitiva actuum	lego	(dependent)	librum	(terminus) (terminant)
Transitiva personarum	filius	(dependent)	Socratis	(terminant)

The question is which will be the terminant and which the dependent, since we cannot have two of either in any construction; once more, Thomas refers to a metaphysical correlate to explain a grammatical feature. Substance in nature is a combination of matter and form, one of which is act and the other potency,<sup>2</sup> and so in grammar a construction is made up of dependent and terminant.<sup>3</sup> Thomas defines these by means of not very satisfactory notional criteria, i.e. that a constructible which, by reason of any mode of signifying 'seeks' or 'looks forward' is the dependent, and the

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1. cf. 5.1112, p.286.

2. Thomas's use of such terms in grammar is more extensively discussed in 3.11.

3. Thomas of Erfurt, # 191: sicut ex materia et forma, quorum unum est in actum alterum in potentia, fit per se compositum in natura; sic ex ratione dependendi et terminandi fit per se constructio in sermone.



constructible which, by reason of any mode of signifying, 'gives' or 'satisfies' is the terminant.<sup>1</sup> In actual fact, the description of these constructibles can be made much more economically, i.e. in a transitive construction the first constructible is the dependent and the second the terminant, e.g. *lego librum*, and in an intransitive construction the first constructible is the terminant and the second the dependent, e.g. *Socrates currit*;<sup>2</sup> in other words, in any transitive construction the sequence is dependent-terminant and in any intransitive construction the sequence is terminant-dependent.

As we have said, each basic construction type can be divided into actuum and personarum; in the actuum construction,<sup>3</sup> the dependent member will always be the verb (signifying by means of the *modus actus*), and the terminant member will be a nominal form; we have thus a system of NV and VN constructions which can be described as the favourite construction types of Latin and are imposed on the Modistae by their own grammatical tradition and traditional logic. The intransitive personarum type of construction<sup>4</sup> represents various kinds of expansion by means of a modification of the N or the V element of the actuum construction;

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1. Thomas of Erfurt, *¶* 191: *illud constructibile est dependens, quod ratione alicuius modi significandi tantum petit vel exigit; illud constructibile est terminans, quod ratione alicuius modi significandi tantum dat, vel concedit, etc.*
  2. The closest that Thomas comes to making such a succinct statement are the definitions of the transitive and intransitive constructions found on p. 547, fn. 2, 3.
  3. Thomas of Erfurt, *¶* 195: *constructio intransitiva actuum est in quo constructibile dependens per modum actus significat.*
  4. Thomas of Erfurt, *¶* 195: *constructio intransitiva personarum est in qua constructibile dependens significat per modum substantiae vel quomodolibet aliter.*



this modification can in effect be made by any type of pars orationis, since by definition, the dependent constructible in a personarum construction can signify by means of the mode of substance (modus substantiae) or any other pars orationis, except that the preposition cannot determine the verbal member; in the transitive personarum construction we have a purely nominal piece in which the terminant constructible, which can be one of four cases, i.e. genitive, dative, accusative or ablative, will represent the variation in this type of construction. This division of transitive and intransitive, actuum and personarum does not, however, fall equally under the modern exocentric-endocentric type of construction; only one, i.e. the SP or NV intransitive actuum construction is an exocentric construction, all the others being endocentric; an additional qualification is imposed on the two members of the constructio intransitiva personarum in that one member will be the determinant and the other will be the determinable constructible - and this additional qualification can be applied to either member of the intransitive actuum construction. We can, therefore, present the various constructions according to the following scheme:

<u>Intransitive</u>	<u>Actuum:</u>	<u>Personarum:</u>
	NV: exocentric	N determination: endocentric
		V determination: endocentric
<u>Transitive</u>	VN: endocentric    NN: endocentric.	

There are, in Thomas's scheme, two key concepts of inter-word relationships, i.e. dependentia and determinatio. (1)

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1) cf. also 3.13, p. 96-7.



Dependentia is a quasi-formal term used to express any relationship between two constructibles; it should not be interpreted as a head-subordinate relationship but more like the modern use of rection.<sup>1</sup> The terminant constructible must state the specific nature of the relationship, whereas the dependent constructible merely specifies the type of relationship, i.e. NV, VN, or NN without further specification, i.e. in "Socrates currit", 'Socrates' is the terminant and 'currit' is the dependent, and in "Socratis interest", 'Socratis', though in the genitive case, is however the terminant and 'interest' the dependent; it is undoubtedly the dependent constructible which actually creates the relationship. Determinatio is used to describe the relationship between the member, either N or V, of the intransitive construction which has acquired an additional qualification or modification; in such cases we can talk about subordinate and head, the subordinate being the determinant constructible used to specify or qualify the head members of the construction, e.g. 'albus' is the subordinate in "homo albus" just as 'bene' is the subordinate in "currit bene".

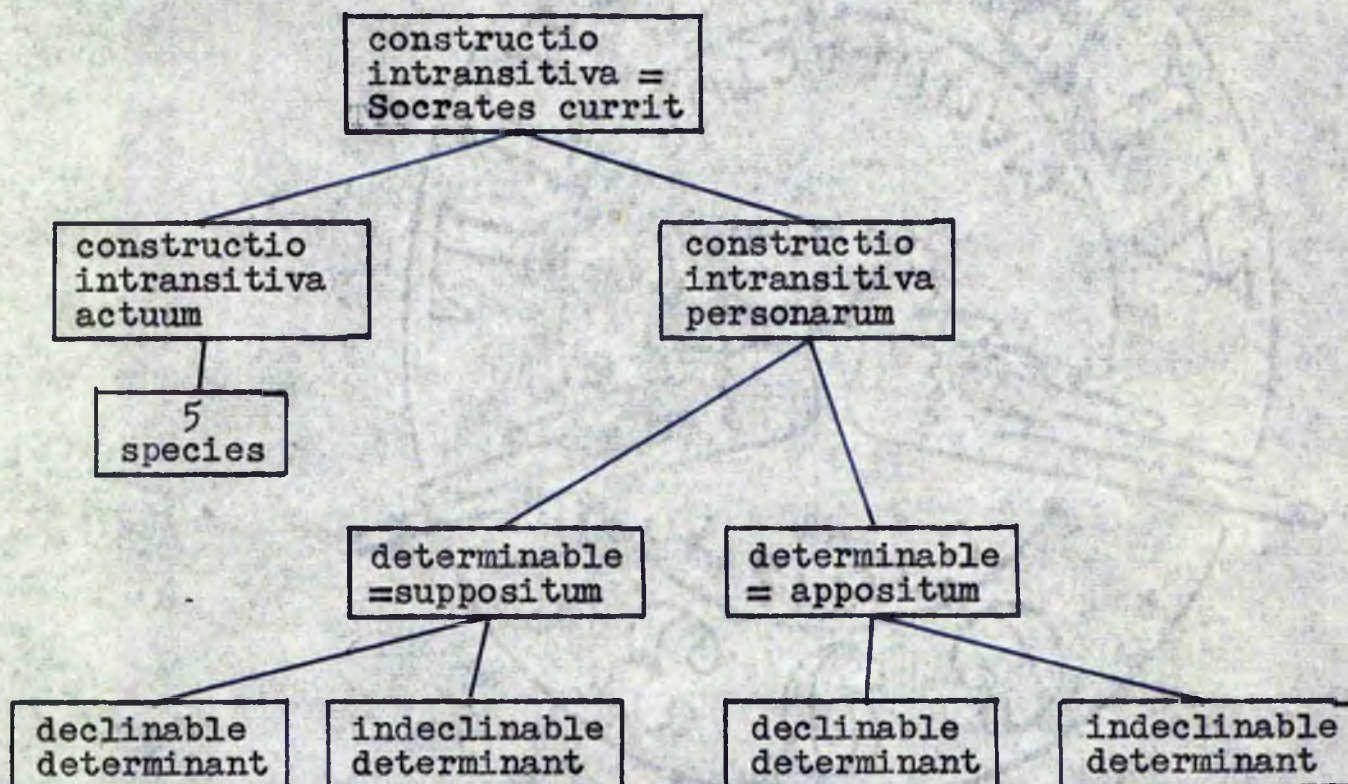
There are five types of the NV type, i.e. the intransitive type of construction; these vary according to the case-form of the N element. Of the six cases of the nomen, all with the exception of the vocative which can never be the first element of a construction,<sup>2</sup> can be the N and therefore act as the suppositum<sup>3</sup>

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- 1) L. Hjelmslev, Principes de Grammaire générale, pp. 127-162.
  - 2) As long ago as the Stoics and as recently as Professor Hjelmslev, there has been dispute about the 'casual' nature of the vocative; cf. 5.1112, p.295-6, and L. Hjelmslev. La Catégorie des Cas, p. 1-22.
  - 3) This term is discussed in 3.13.



of these constructions, which can be exemplified thus, and according to the following diagram:

- a) nominative - Socrates currit.
- b) genitive - Socratis interest.
- c) dative - Socrati accidit.
- d) accusative - Socratem legere oportet.
- e) ablative - a Socrate legitur.



There are four species of the VN type, i.e. the transitive actuum (signati) type of construction,<sup>1</sup> varying according to the N element; the nominative and vocative cannot function as the

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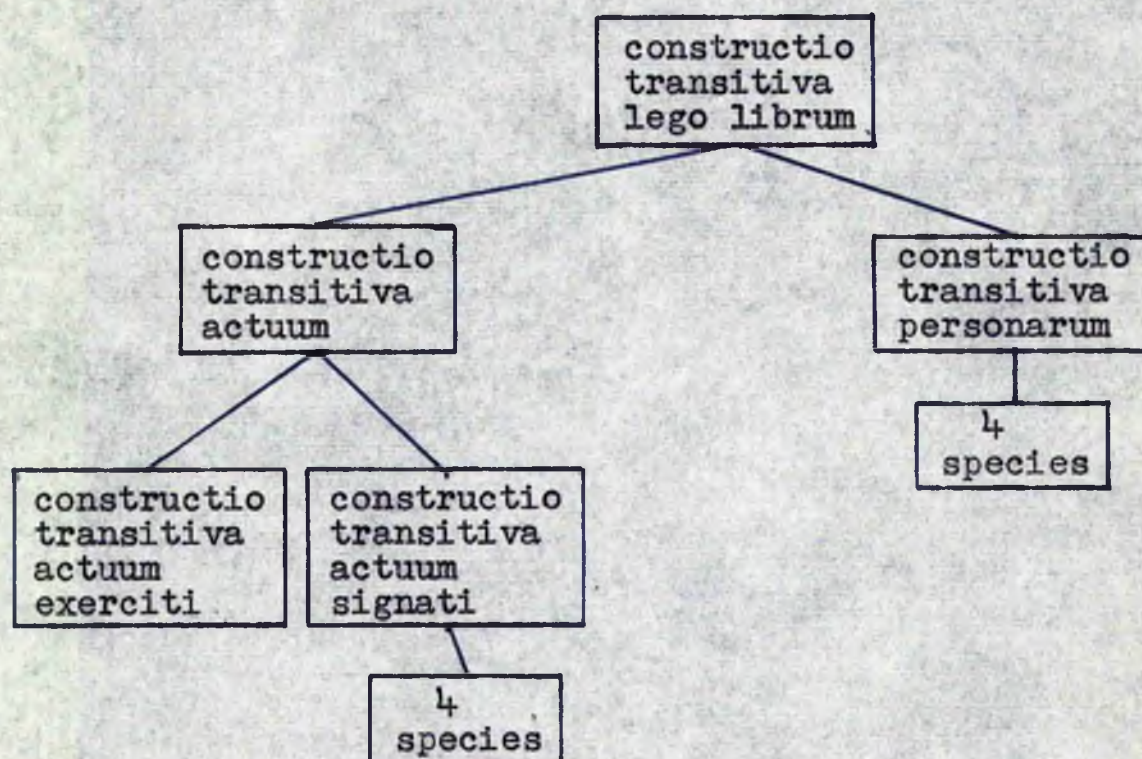
1) Thomas of Erfurt, *213*: constructio transitiva actuum dividitur in constructionem transitivam actus signati, et in constructionem transitivam actus exerciti ... (*214*): constructio transitiva actus signati dividitur secundum diversitatem constructibilis terminantis.



N element in these constructions which can be exemplified thus:

- a) genitive - misereor Socratis
- b) dative - faveo Socrati
- c) accusative - lego librum
- d) ablative - utor toga,

and also by means of the following diagram:



The intransitive personarum constructions represent expansions of either the N or the V element, in which the N or the V will be the determinable element; the determinant member can be either a declinable or an indeclinable pars orationis. If the determinable element is the N, then there are four possible constructions, by making the determinant a declinable pars which will therefore be one of four possible types of adjective, e.g. denominativum, relativum, interrogativum, distributivum, e.g. "homo albus", "omnis homo"; this type can be symbolised  $\overline{A1}$



If the determinable element is the N and the determinant an indeclinable pars, there will be four possible constructions according to the different indeclinable partes; this can be exemplified thus, and symbolised  $\angle A2 \angle$ :

- a) Adverbium - Tantum Socrates legit.
- b) Coniunctio - Socrates et Plato currunt
- c) Praepositio - A Socrate legitur.
- d) Interiectio - Heu mortuus est.

If the determinable element is the V member, the determinant can be either a declinable or an indeclinable pars. If it is a declinable pars, we can have constructions such as: "sum albus" or "voco Adrianus", in which we have either a copula, i.e. verbum substantivum, or a verbum vocativum (1), in which the dependence is 'backwards', and this type can be symbolised  $\angle B1 \angle$ . If the determinant is an indeclinable pars, there will be only three possible types of construction depending on the type of indeclinable pars involved, since the preposition does not by definition construct with the verb; this type can be symbolised  $\angle B2 \angle$ . Unfortunately, Thomas does not provide us with specific examples of this type of construction; however, the construction he used to exemplify the intransitive personarum, e.g. "Socrates albus currit bene" can be analysed into an intransitive construction of the  $\angle A1 \angle$  type and an intransitive construction of the  $\angle B2 \angle$  type, both of them being 'personarum' constructions so that the whole construction can be analysed thus:

Socrates albus	currit bene.
└───┘	└───┘
$\angle A1 \angle$	$\angle B2 \angle$

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1) cf. 5.1121, p.331-33 for discussion of these two types of verb.



The transitive personarum constructions are the NN type only, and there are four species of this type of construction according to the case of the terminant constructible, i.e. the second N, and can be exemplified thus:

- a) genitive - filius Socratis.
- b) dative - similis Socrati.
- c) ablative - celer pedibus.

#### 5.241 Constructio intransitiva.

An intransitive construction is one in which the second constructible depends<sup>1</sup> on the first<sup>2</sup>, e.g. "Socrates currit"; in such constructions the first constructible is the terminant and the second the dependent. This type of construction can be divided into two types, i.e. actuum and personarum, the actuum exhibiting the basic pattern of suppositum and appositum which is the favourite SP sentence type of Latin, and the personarum consists of a combination of determinable and determinant which is a modification applicable to either the suppositum or appositum. There are thus two types of intransitive constructions, which it might be feasible to call major and minor, the major type being the intransitive actuum of the NV type - this will be an Immediate Constituent<sup>3</sup> and at the same time a simple sentence. The constructio personarum is

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1) cf. 3.13 for this term.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, *¶* 192: constructio intransitiva est constructio, in qua secundum constructibile, per suos modos significandi, dependet ad primum.

3) There is a wealth of literature on Immediate Constituent analysis theory, cf.:

R.S. Wells, *Immediate Constituents*, *Language* 23 (1947). 81-117.

H.A. Gleason, *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics* (1955) pp. 133-140.



a minor construction made up of a determinable and a determinant and used to modify either the suppositum or the appositum; although it forms a grammatical syntagm, it will not form a complete sentence. "Socrates currit" is a constructio actuum, in which Socrates is the suppositum and also the terminant constructible, and 'currit' is the appositum and the constructible dependent on the suppositum. "Socrates albus" is a constructio personarum consisting of the determinable 'Socrates' which must be the terminant constructible and the determinant 'albus' which must be the dependent. The construction "Socrates albus currit bene" is in fact made up of two lesser intransitive constructions, i.e. the constructio personarum 'Socrates albus' and the intransitive constructio personarum 'currit bene', of which the first is an expansion of the suppositum 'Socrates' and the second an expansion of the appositum 'currit'.

#### 5.2411 Constructio intransitiva actuum.

This type is a construction in which the dependent constructible signified by means of the mode of action (1), e.g. Socrates currit; the basic pattern is the NV type and represents the favourite SP sentence type of Latin, a different suppositum being used as a means of varying the type of construction. The appositum signified by means of the modus distantis (2) and is thereby separate from the suppositum, except that the accidental mode of 'composito' renews

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #195: constructio intransitiva actuum est in qua constructibile dependens per modum actus significat.
  - 2) An essential criterion for the verb, cf. 5.112.



the connection between the suppositum and the appositum, and offsets the separability of 'distantia'<sup>1</sup>; the verb must be in grammatical proportionality (proportio), a term which, as we have seen,<sup>2</sup> represents syntactic linkage and complementation, to the suppositum, and it will be the case form of the suppositum which will be the only means of varying this type of construction. It may be any case with the exception of the vocative, since this case, as was shown in the section of case in the accidental modes of the nomen,<sup>3</sup> can never be the first member of a construction.

#### 5.2412 Congruitas constructionis intransitivae actuum.

The congruence of this type of construction will consist of six modes of signifying in the dependent appositum which must be congruent to six modes of signifying in the terminant suppositum. There is an association, for the Modistae, between word-order and the function of the case-form<sup>4</sup>; in an intransitive actuum construction, any case-form, except the vocative, can be the first i.e. the terminant constructible and therefore it can act as the suppositum, and similarly in a transitive construction, as we shall see<sup>5</sup>, any case-form, except the nominative and vocative, will be the second or oblique constructible.

- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, # 196: cum appositum significet per modum distantis a supposito secundum situm, ideo supposito addi non potest sine medio. Tale medium est ipsa compositio ... et ideo compositio in huiusmodi dependentia maxime est verbo necessaria.
- 2) cf. 3.13 for the use of the term 'proportio'.
- 3) cf. 5.1112, cf.p. 296.
- 4) This has been discussed before in more detail, cf. pp. 285-6.
- 5) cf. 5.2421.



The congruence (*congruitas*) between the terminant and dependent members of an intransitive actuum construction derives from six factors which are the same in every construction, except for one factor, for all the cases of the suppositum, i.e. for the suppositum, the *modus entis*, the *modus per se stantis*, the *ratio principii*, *numerus*, *persona*, and the sixth represents a different criterion for each case, e.g. *modus ut quod est alterum* which is one of the semi-formal criteria for the nominative case<sup>1</sup> - this will vary therefore according to the case of the nomen acting as the suppositum; for the appositum, its criteria for the congruence of the construction are the *modus esse*, *compositio* and mood (which are accidental modes of the verb) which create the NV relationship between the suppositum and the verb<sup>2</sup>, *numerus*, *persona*, and the *modus ut ipsum est alterum* which corresponds to the *modus ut quod est alterum* in the suppositum and represents the proportionality<sup>3</sup> of the verb to the appropriate case of the suppositum; the element which changes in the suppositum and the appositum will be the '*modus ut quod est alterum*' and the '*modus ut illud est alterum*', and will change in accordance with the case of the nomen-suppositum.

#### 5.2413 Constructio intransitiva personarum.

The characteristic feature of the *constructio actuum* was the suppositum-appositum relationship, in which the variable element

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1) cf. the discussion of *casus*. 5.1112. p.286-9.

2) cf. the discussion of these modes in the verb, 5.1122, pp.345-56.

3) cf. 3.13 for the use of '*proportio*'.



was the terminant constructible, i.e. the suppositum; this SP type, one of the favourite sentence types of Latin, can be classed as a major construction. The intransitive personarum represents a very different type of construction, in which the dependent constructible signifies by means of the mode of substance or any other pars<sup>1</sup>. It must be classed as a minor construction since it does not represent a favourite sentence type, and is made up of the determinable and determinant elements. This type of construction is variegated by means of the difference in the determining constructible.

The constructio personarum can be used to modify the suppositum or the appositum of an intransitive actuum constructio; if it modifies the suppositum, it can do so by means of a determinant which can be either a declinable or an indeclinable pars orationis. The declinable determinant will be one of four kinds of adjective, i.e. denominativum, relativum, interrogativum, or distributivum, e.g. equus albus, omnis homo.

If the determinant of the suppositum is an indeclinable pars orationis, it will be either an adverb, conjunction, preposition, or interjection, and in each case the indeclinable pars represents a different determination of the suppositum. The adverb acting as the determination of the suppositum can be explained by analogy to the construction "currere velociter est bonum", in which the infinitive acts as the suppositum by becoming a nominal element

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~195~~ 195: constructio intransitiva personarum est in qua constructibile dependens significat per modum substantiae, vel quomodolibet aliter.



and the adverb 'velociter' acts as the determinant constructible by virtue of the verblity of the suppositum<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, the participle 'mortuus' can act as the suppositum because the participle possesses the qualities<sup>2</sup> of an adjective which is a sub-species of nomen in the Modistic system, and in this particular instance, the interjection will act as its determinant.

The determinant can also be added to the appositum and in such a construction, as in the previous types of constructio personarum, the determinant can be either declinable or indeclinable. If the determinant is declinable, it will produce a construction in which the determinant becomes the predicate of the copula or of the verbum vocativum, in which the dependence will be 'backwards', e.g. sum albus", "voco Adrianus", i.e. 'albus' is the determinant of the determinable 'sum'.

If the determinant is indeclinable, then it is possible to have one of three types of construction according to the dependent constructible, i.e. conjunction, adverb or interjection; the preposition cannot, of course, be a member of this type of construction since it must be the determinant in a construction in which the determinable will be a substantive.

#### 5.2414 Congruitas constructionis intransitivas personarum.

The concord (congruitas)<sup>3</sup> pattern of a construction, in

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, #208, in ista oratione infinitivus non supponit per se, sed gratia nominis.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #208: participium per accidens est suppositum, cum omne participium sit adiectivum.
  - 3) The use of congruitas is discussed in 3.13: concord is used as a translation equivalent of 'congruitas' but it should not be taken as 'concord' in the modern sense.



which the determinant is a declinable pars and is being used to determine the suppositum, consists of seven criteria, six of which are the same in every instance and the seventh refers more directly to the type of adjective used and its relationship to the constructible it will determine. These seven items of concord show an interesting structural pattern. The first criterion establishes the general nature of the relationship between the two constructibles, i.e. the mode of determining (*modus determinantis*) on the part of the determinant and the mode of determinability (*modus determinabilis*) on the part of the determinable: the second refers to the basic and essential relationship between the two constructibles by means of their essential modes of signifying, i.e. the *modus adiacentis*, the characteristic feature of the adjective, and the *modus per se stantis*, the mark of the *nomen substantivum*: the other four criteria, common to all the constructions made up of this type of constructible, refer to the necessary congruence, i.e. of gender, number, case, and person, which must exist between two constructibles which share a common essence but which are, however, derived from the other<sup>1</sup>; the final item represents the particular type of constructible which is the determinant member and will vary in every instance according to the determinant constructible involved.

The congruence (*congruitas*) of a construction in which the determinant constructible is an indeclinable pars can be described by means of two criteria; the general criterion is the

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~71~~ 71: *adiectivis, quae genus non habent ex proprietate suae rei subiectae, sed ex proprietate rei substantivi nominis.*



same in all these constructions and serves to establish the general nature of the relationship between the constructibles: the relationship of the determinant is expressed by the mode of determining (*modus determinantis*) and the determinable is expressed by the mode of determinability (*modus determinabilis*) as in the case when the determinant constructible was a declinable *pars orationis*. The second criterion, the particular, will be decided by and will vary according to the different indeclinable *pars* acting as the determinant in each of these constructions, e.g. the *modus coniungentis* in the construction with the conjunction as the determinant and the *modus coniungibilis* for the determinable, i.e. the *suppositum*; the correlative modes will similarly be required for the other indeclinable determinants.

In a construction when the determinant is applied to the *appositum*, the congruence is defined according to the same criteria as in those constructions when these indeclinable *partes* were the determinant of the *suppositum*<sup>1</sup>; therefore, in the construction "*currit bene*", we shall require the general criterion of the *modus determinabilis* on the part of '*currit*' and

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1) This section, i.e. the construction of the *appositum* and its determinant constructible is one of the least satisfactory of Thomas's theory of the construction; the criteria are vague, and the dearth of illustration suggests that Thomas was aware of the flimsiness of this section and the *lacunae* in its argument in sharp contrast to his analysis of other types of construction. On the whole, his system of syntactic analysis is surprisingly modern in its attempt, despite all the drawbacks and restrictions implicit in an analysis of favourite sentence types established by means of non-linguistic criteria, to produce an analysis which might well be described as one of rudimentary Immediate Constituent analysis.



also the specific criterion required of the adverb together with the corresponding criteria required of the verb which is to be determined by the adverb<sup>1</sup>.

#### 5.242 Constructio transitive.

A construction, in which the first constructible depends on the second, and the second constructible, if it has any dependence at all, will be the dependent of something which is quite different from the first constructible and will not immediately be part of this particular construction, is a transitive construction<sup>2</sup>. If we take as an example, "percutio Socratem", we see that the first constructible, i.e. 'percutio' is the first and dependent constructible, while 'Socratem' is the second and terminant constructible: this is, of course a complete contrast to his intransitive construction. In this particular example, the terminant 'Socratem' is the dependent of no other constructible but serves merely to complete the dependence of the first constructible. In the case of "video legentem librum", we have two transitive constructions, i.e. 'video legentem' and 'legentem librum'; the first 'legentem' is

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- 1) The specific criterion will be, on the part of the adverb the *modus determinantis ratione significati* and on the part of the verb the *modus determinabilis*; it should be noted that the *modus determinantis* and the *modus determinabilis* that are required as the general criterion refer to the relationship of the constructibles in this type of construction, while the *modus determinantis ratione significati* refers to the definition of the subaltern mode of the adverb to which 'bene' belongs. cf. 5.1211.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, 192: *constructio intransitiva est in qua primum constructibile, per suos modos significandi, dependet ad secundum, secundo per eius dependentiam a primo recedente, si dependens fuerit.*



the terminant of the dependent 'video' but becomes, with the addition of 'librum' the dependent of the oblique form, so that we have a constructible being at one and the same time the terminant of a construction and the dependent of a constructible which is quite different from the first.

The transitive construction, like the intransitive, is divided into actuum and personarum, the dependent member of the actuum signifying by means of the mode of action (modus actus) and will be the verb, and the dependent member of the personarum signifying by means of the mode of substance (modus substantiae) and will be a nomen; the general pattern of the actuum is VN and of the personarum NN.

Thomas points out that the terms transitive and intransitive are related to the verb 'transire', the transitive referring to something which 'transit' from one place to another quite different place, whereas the intransitive does not 'transire' but remains in the same place<sup>1</sup>; the result is that in the intransitive construction the dependence of the second constructible belongs to the first, whereas in a transitive construction the 'dependence' of the second constructible, if there is any further dependence, does not belong to the first but may 'transit' to something quite different from the first<sup>2</sup>. This means that in the

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- 1) As we have seen all along, this definition by meaning is quite in keeping with the Modistic scheme of stating all their grammatical criteria in semantic terms.
  - 2) Thomas of Erfurt, #194: constructionem intransitivam esse illam in qua constructibilia pertinent ad idem, vel tanquam ad idem videntur pertinere; constructionem transitivam esse illam, in qua constructibilia pertinent ad diversa, vel videntur pertinere ad diversa.



intransitive construction the second constructible which depends on the first will be identified with the first constructible, whereas in the transitive construction, the second constructible does not depend on the first, but tends to move away from the first constructible by virtue of its own potential dependence.

#### 5.2421 Constructio transitiva actuum.

This construction is one in which the dependent constructible signifies by means of the mode of action<sup>1</sup>, e.g. "lego librum". It is divided into two types, i.e. the actus signati and the actus exerciti.

The transitive construction actuum signati is divided and classified by means of the different terminant constructibles, which will be done in a four-fold manner according to the case of the terminant constructible, i.e. genitive = misereor Socratis, dative 6 faveo Socrati, accusative = percutio Socratem, and ablative = utor toga.

The 'exerciti' type of transitive construction is not divided into different species but into individuals, and consists of the vocative with the adverb "o".

#### 5.2422 Congruitas constructionis transitivae actuum.

As in the case of the intransitive constructions, the congruence of transitive construction of the actus signati type stems from three general and specific criteria on the part of

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, ~~212~~ 212: constructio transitiva actuum est in qua constructibile dependens per modum actus significat.



both constructibles; on the part of the dependent, i.e. the verb, the general criteria are the *modus esse*, which is its essential feature, *significatio*, i.e. the accidental mode of the verb which creates the relationship of dependence by the verb on a post-posed oblique nominal form, and the accidental mode of genus which signifies the quality of the relationship created by the 'significatio' between the verb and the post-posed oblique; on the part of the terminant constructible, i.e. the nominal oblique, there must be, corresponding to those of the dependent verb, the *modus entis* which is the essential feature of the nomen, the *modus per se stantis* which represents the *nomen substantivum* (because it would be wrong to say "*percutio album*"), and thirdly, the mode of absolute final which will also include those instances of absolute final, though a preposition may have been used to create the actual VN relationship<sup>1</sup> - this produces a relationship rather like that of verb and object, e.g. the accusative *without* *ob preposition being the object in these instances.*

The special criteria vary in every instance, since a different concord will be required according to the case of the oblique nominal; the congruence between the dependent, i.e. the verb, and the terminant, i.e. the substantive in an oblique form, is based on the criteria for the different cases of the nomen, so that in "*misereor Socratis*", the concord of the dependent and the terminant will be "*ut alterius*" and "*ut cuius*", which are, as we have seen, the semi-formal criteria for the genitive case.

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1) Thomas of Erfurt, *214*: *ex parte dependentis est modus generis, qui est quasi qualitas significationis accidentalis; cui correspondet in obliquo modus significandi per modum termini absolute modo conformi casuum contrahibilis.*



The concord of an 'exerciti' type of construction consists of the general modes and requires on the part of the terminant constructible the modus per se stantis and also the position of absolute final for the terminant; two special elements are also required, i.e. the modus excitantis or vocantis on the part of the adverb "o" and the modus excitati on the part of the vocative.

#### 5.2423 Constructio transitiva personarum

This is the construction in which the dependent constructible signifies by means of the mode of substance<sup>1</sup>, and there are four species of this type of construction according to the differences of the terminant constructible; in each case the terminant consists of a nomen in a different case, i.e. genitive = filius Socratis, dative = similes Socrati, and ablative = celer pedibus<sup>2</sup>; it must be pointed out, however, that 'dependent' in this type of construction does not imply a relationship of subordinate to head.

#### 5.2424 Congruitas constructionis transitivae personarum.

In this type of construction, the congruence consists of the modus entis in both constructibles but as the mode of transition (modus transeuntis) in the dependent and the modus per se stantis in the terminant. The terminant must be a nomen substantivum; therefore it is incongruous to say "misereor albi" and equally so to say "cappa albi"; therefore on the model of the congruent

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- 1) Thomas of Erfurt, # 212: constructio transitiva personarum est in qua constructibile dependens per modum substantiae significat.
  - 2) Thomas also listed the accusative as one of the possible cases which can act as the terminant in this type of construction and gives as an instance "Petrus albus percutit pedem". His criteria seems to be, to say the least, confused since in the same paragraph he says: # 215: constructio quae est adiectivi cum accusativo, non est incongrua, sed figurativa. Accusativus solus construitur congrue cum verbis significantibus actum, quia accusativus est terminus actus signati.



construction "misereor Socratis", it is possible to create the congruent construction of "cappa Socratis". The special criterion for the congruence of these constructions consists of the congruence based on the translation equivalents, i.e. "ut alterius/cuius", etc for the dependent and "ut cuius" etc for the terminant, which are also, as we have seen<sup>1</sup>, the semi-formal criteria of case as an accidental mode of the nomen.

### 5.243 Summary.

Of the three speech stages which make up Thomas's theory of syntax, the constructio perfecta presupposes the congruitas which in turn presupposes the constructio. The constructio is really nothing more than a combination of the constructibles made up from the similarity of their modes of signifying; the congruitas goes one step further and requires not just any combination of constructibles but one created by the requirements of a particular construction which imposes its requirements on the choice of the modes of signifying of the constructible members; lastly, the perfectio requires not just any concordant combination of constructibles, but a combination which will produce a favourite sentence type, e.g. the suppositum-appositum type, containing a verbal piece which will express a compound concept of the mind and create perfect sense in the hearer's mind<sup>2</sup>.

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1) cf. 5.1112. p. 282-4.

2) Thomas of Erfurt, # 229: perfectio requirit constructibilium unionem, non quorumcumque, sed solum suppositi cum apposito, ex confirmitate omnium modorum significandi causatam, cum sufficientia exprimendi mentis conceptum compositum secundum distantiam, et generandi perfectum sensum in animo auditoris.



It is clear, that to Thomas at least, the construction was by far the most important of these stages, and he therefore concentrates on a lengthy exposition of the various types of construction, being content to expound briefly afterwards the general principles of 'congruence' (congruitas) and completion (perfectio), having already described in much more detail the congruence of these various constructions along with his analysis and exposition of the constructions themselves.

There are two basic types of construction, i.e. transitive and intransitive, both of which are sub-divided into actuum and personarum. The intransitive actuum construction represents the favourite sentence type of Latin, i.e. subject-predicate or suppositum-appositum; there are five different kinds of this type of construction but it is only the differences in the suppositum which will create these five different species of the construction. The constructio personarum, and this is true of both the intransitive and transitive constructions of this type, does not belong to any favourite sentence type: the intransitive personarum is used to describe a modification of either the suppositum or appositum of an SP type of sentence. The transitive construction is also divided into actuum and personarum; the transitive actuum represents another favourite sentence type of Latin, i.e. the type consisting of verb and oblique nominal form: the transitive actuum is divided into actus exerciti which consists of the vocative and the adverb "o" and cannot be sub-divided into types but individual instances, and into the actus



signati which varies according to the oblique nominal form and strictly speaking it is the actus signati type which produces the favourite V<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub> sentence type. The entire definition of transitive and intransitive as used by Thomas to define his constructions is of course quite different from traditional definitions, being a definition of the type of construction regardless of the structure or the type of constructible of the construction, and not of the verb, i.e. the intransitive construction consisting of the second constructible dependent on the first, and the transitive construction consisting of the first constructible dependent on the second constructible.

### 5.3 Conclusion

This chapter has consisted of an analysis and description of the partes orationis described by the Modistae; this is, in fact, the most important part of Modistic grammatical theory. A brief exposition of the syntactical theories of the Modistae has also been given, but it is quite evident that syntax was evolved, apart from certain unconscious influences, in terms of the modes of signifying of the partes orationis and cannot, therefore, be really considered as separate from their theories of the modes of signifying.



In summary, then, it can be said that the partes orationis were described by the Modistae according to the following plan (1); the partes were divided into declinable and indeclinable, the declinable partes being then separated according to their essential modes of signifying (2), i.e. whether they signified by means of the modus entis, as the nomen and pronomen do, or whether they signified by means of the modus esse, as the verbum and participium do (3). Each pars orationis was described separately in terms of its essential modes and then its accidental modes; at this stage of the description, there is a slight divergence between Thomas and Siger, but it is one of organisation of their material and not one of doctrine (4). Siger divided his essential mode into general and specific, the general mode being used to state the similarities between the pars in question and any other pars, e.g. the nomen and pronomen share the modus entis as their general essential mode of signifying (5), and the specific mode which represents the specific difference between the pars in question and every other pars and becomes in effect the definition of the pars (6).

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- 1) cf. the diagram in Appendix D, p. 663.
  - 2) cf. the diagrams in Appendix D attempt to show the inter-relationships between the declinable and indeclinable partes by means of their essential modes of signifying.
  - 3) The diagram in Appendix D represents the modus entis of the nomen in much greater detail.
  - 4) The diagrams in Appendix C show how their presentation varies.
  - 5) cf. 5.1111 and 5.1141.
  - 6) Siger in fact never offers an actual definition of a pars, but if we were to compare his modus specificus with the definition offered by Thomas, we would find that there is little or no difference between them - this is certainly true of the indeclinables.



Thomas divides his essential mode into *generalissimus*, *subalternus* and *specialissimus* (1): the *modus generalissimus* contains in the one mode the same features and doctrine that Siger described by means of his two essential modes, (except in the case of the indeclinable *partes*, when Thomas's *modus generalissimus* contains only those features listed by Siger as the *modus specificus* of the particular indeclinable *pars*). If the essential modes of Siger and the *modus generalissimus* of Thomas are staggered (2), it is possible to assess the similarities (which are very real) between Siger's and Thomas's doctrines; Thomas then uses his *modus subalternus* and *specialissimus* to describe much more fully, if not exhaustively, the various types of word which are members of this particular *pars orationis*, e.g. the *nomen* is divided into the subaltern modes of *proprium* and *appellativum*, which are then divided into their various *modi specialissimi* to become the different nouns and adjectives which together constitute the *pars orationis* of *nomen* (3). The other *partes orationis* are similarly treated (4). The declinable *partes* are each also described in terms of their accidental modes - sufficient mention has already been made of the accidental modes of the indeclinable *partes* (5); some of these accidental modes are familiar to traditional and modern grammar, e.g. gender, number, case, person, mood, etc. but others are peculiar to the *Modistae*, e.g. *compositio* in the verb (6).

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- 1) cf. 4.244.
  - 2) cf. p. 186.
  - 3) cf. 5.1111.
  - 4) cf. ad loc.
  - 5) cf. 5.12.
  - 6) cf. 5.1122.



These accidental modes are an important part of Modistic procedure - so much so, that Siger tends to neglect the essential modes and concentrate on the accidental modes (1), - they represent variations imposed on the essence of the pars and together with the essential modes they combine to make up the totality of the pars. The accidental modes (and in the case of Siger the essential modes too) are subjected to a further classification, i.e. that of absolute or respective mode (2), which describes the mode in terms of its syntactic potentiality, i.e. certain modes have in themselves no syntactical function, e.g. figura which can be described in modern terms as 'morphemic base structure' (3), and are therefore absolute modes, but other modes are respective, since they may realise a syntactic relationship either of concord or government with other partes or other members of the same pars, e.g. gender between the substantive and adjective, or case between the substantive and verb (4). All these modes of signifying were expressed in morpho-semantic terms, some of which are perhaps more formal than others, but it must be remembered that they are the formulations by the Modistae of the same formal features of Latin ~~but~~ the modern linguist

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1) This is certainly true if the amount of space devoted to the essential and accidental modes of the nomen and verbum is any guide.

2) cf. 4.243.

3) cf. R.E. Robins, *Thrax*, p.99.

4) Thomas of Erfurt, #149: tempus non est accidens respectivum verbi, cum secundum ipsum non dependeat ante se ad suppositum, nec post se ad obliquum.



linguistique' and Modistic use of 'signum' and 'modus signandi' (1); Modistic use of 'vox' is also part of their 'sign' theory, and although they do exclude phonetics from their linguistic theory, we cannot dismiss 'vox' entirely from their descriptive scheme. If in fact we consider 'vox' to be the element of 'expression' in their scheme, we would find a state of affairs not unlike de Saussure's 'phonème' (2), although 'vox' bears no resemblance whatsoever to the Bloomfieldian 'phoneme'. Once more we must counsel caution, because this similarity between 'vox' and the Saussurean 'phonème' is only relative, if for no other reason than that de Saussure did not exclude phonic criteria from his theory, whereas the Modistae do avoid any reference to 'le mot parlé' and exclude 'action vocale' from their sphere of activity; but 'la réalisation de l'image intérieure dans le discours' is surely very close to the part played by the 'vox' in the change from the modus intelligendi to the modus significandi and in the realisation of the dictio and the pars orationis (3). There is no doubt that de Saussure held that language and the phoneme were independent of sound (4) but this is not the same as saying that sound or phonetic criteria are not part of a linguistic system. The distinction between 'la théorie des sons' and 'la grammaire' is also a very

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(1) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.82-3.

(2) F. de Saussure, Cours de linguistique générale, p.98: ce terme, impliquant une idée d'action vocale, ne peut convenir qu'au mot parlé, à la réalisation de l'image intérieure dans le discours.

(3) cf. p. 120 .

(4) B. Siertsema, A Study of Glossematics, p.3.



characteristic feature of Hjelmslev's theories; he too argues that the phoneme is not a phonetic abstraction. Just as de Saussure had defined 'langue' as form and not a substance, so too Hjelmslev considers language to be a form and not a substance (1), the implication being that there must be a clear-cut division between the phonetic and the grammatical study of language, what Garvin has called a "one-sided interpretation of the Saussurean concept of language" (2). Hjelmslev does not consider that linguistics is at all concerned with 'la réalisation matérielle' of languages, a task which he bequeaths to other sciences; this is very similar to the Modistic dismissal of phonetics to the province of the physicist. There are statements in Hjelmslev's Prolegomena which suggest a sharp separation between the phonic and grammatical elements (3), and these statements are not unlike the Modistic and mediaeval logical arguments for their separation (4). De Saussure and Hjelmslev are not alone among modern linguists in arguing for a separation of phonetics from grammar; both Trager (5) and Troubetzkoy (6)

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(1) L.Hjelmslev, Prolegomena, p.49.

(2) P.L. Garvin, Review of: Prolegomena to a Theory of Language by Louis Hjelmslev. Language 30 (1954), 90.

(3) L.Hjelmslev, Prolegomena, p.49: considerations...lead us to recognise that language is a form and that outside that form, with function to it, is present a non-linguistic stuff, the so-called substance. While it is the business of linguistics to analyse the linguistic form, it will just as inevitably fall to the lot of other sciences to analyse the substance.

(4) cf. p.125-8.

(5) G.L.Trager, The Field of Linguistics. Studies in Linguistics Occasional Papers No.1., 1949.

(6) N.S.Troubetzkoy, Principes de phonologie, p.11: ce qui caractérise particulièrement la phonétique, c'est qu'en est tout à fait exclu tout rapport entre le complexe phonique étudié et sa signification linguistique.



have suggested that phonetics lies on the periphery of linguistics and that phonetics does not really come within the province of the grammarian. There still remains the one gap, - and this is, on this topic, surely unbridgeable, - between the Modistae and the moderns, i.e. that the Modistae do exclude sound altogether from grammar, whereas the moderns insist on sound as a part of language study even if they do not agree on the part sound and phonetics are to play in it.

In addition to the absence of phonetic criteria from their descriptions, a further inadequacy in the descriptive procedure of the Modistae is that they, although influenced, as we have so often insisted, by their intellectual and academic background, do not present a grammatical analysis in terms of their intellectual background although this background constantly reveals itself in their statement. Yet, the background has so often dictated the type of analysis; the linguistic facts remain the same, but it is the interpretation of these facts which differs.

Despite the caveats and criticisms just made, we shall see that there are points of contact between Modistic and modern grammatical theories, but we would be wise to do nothing more than to recognise in certain instances a fortuitous similarity, and in others a potential development, though the likenesses are never deliberately achieved. The interest of these likenesses is that we find similar features in modern descriptions but in a much more developed form and stated in a much more systematic manner. It is interesting



to note that the Modistae introduced features into their analysis of real interest to the modern linguist whenever they abandoned their notional, semantic criteria and started thinking about language in a purely linguistic manner.

Rather than judge the Modistae too harshly, it would be more appropriate if we realised that the Modistae, products of their environment though they may have been, suggested certain analytical procedures which were well in advance of their time. In this context, it is important to note that their descriptive scheme, as was pointed earlier in Chapter III, meets two of Hjelmslev's requirements for a linguistic theory (1) fully, i.e. self-consistency of description and the principle of 'simplicity', although the third requirement, i.e. exhaustiveness, is only partially satisfied.

Certain references have been made in the body of this study to resemblances between features in the Modistic system and similar features in some modern theory (2), but these can be called relationships of chance and it would be to attach undue importance to them, if we were to construe anything more than an incidental similarity between them, since such isolated facts cannot of themselves suggest any deeper theoretical relationships.

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(1) L.Hjelmslev, Prolegomena, p.9-11.

(2) Features such as:-  
 Bloomfield's analysis of the word-classes in Tagalog and Siger's theoretical 'archipartes', cf. p.206-7.  
 Frequent reference has been made to the interpenetration of levels, cf. pp.504-5 : 506.  
 Modern IC analysis and the use of the disjunctive proposition.  
 The description of Thomas's constructions as endocentric and exocentric, cf. p. 551 .



At the levels of 'etymologia' and the 'metalanguage' we cannot point to more than one or two incidental similarities (1) and these soon come to an end without having any effect on the descriptive systems of the Modistae or modern theorists (2); it would therefore be unwise to dwell any further on these features.

It is at the level of syntax that we do find more solid ground for arguing on behalf of some relevance between Modistic and modern theories (3), but it is once more imperative to stress the need for caution. Modistic syntactic procedures, at least in so far as Thomas described them, - and Siger had nothing to offer in this section, - were full of lacunae, and it would be doing modern theories of syntax, imperfect though they may be, a grave injustice to suggest that they are in any way really similar to the theories of the Modistae. The fact is that there are two or three features in their syntax which can be discussed in terms of comparable features in modern theory, and it is this likeness which brings a real interest and a further importance (i.e. in addition to their intrinsic value) to the study of Modistic syntactic theories.

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- (1) The similarities between the use of 'vox', the 'signe' of de Saussure and Hjelmslev's 'expression' have already been discussed, cf. p. 128-30 : 586-8.
  - (2) Whatever similarity there may be between Modistic use of 'vox', de Saussure's theory of the 'signe linguistique', and Hjelmslev's theory of 'content and expression', the fact remains that their descriptive methods remain generally quite different, especially as the Modistae excluded all phonetic criteria, whereas de Saussure and Hjelmslev do not.
  - (3) Two modern scholars at least have praised mediaeval contributions to syntactic theory, i.e.:-  
 J. Wackernagel, Vorlesungen über Syntax, Vol. I., p. 23.  
 L. Hjelmslev, Principes de grammaire générale, p. 159-60.



The features in modern linguistics referred to are:

a) Hjelmslev's theories of rection (1), b) the Immediate Constituent analysis of American scholars such as Wells (2), Nida (3), and Gleason (4), c) the theories of syntactic relations taught by Professors Hjelmslev (5) and Bazell (6) - these three features are in fact closely connected. The use made by the Modistae of 'rection' has been discussed in some detail earlier in this study (7) and will not be repeated here; mention has been made of it here in order to link it with these other features of IC analysis and dependence (8), since all of these can be integrated under the rubric of a theory of syntactic relations.

For the sake of completeness, we must however mention the other (9) principal 'schools' of linguistic thought in the 20th century, i.e. Prague, Bloomfield and London;

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- (1) L.Hjelmslev, Principes de grammaire générale, p.127-62.  
L.Hjelmslev, La notion de rection. Acta Linguistica 1(1939), 10-23.
  - (2) R.S.Wells, Immediate Constituents. Language 23 (1947), 81-118.
  - (3) E.A.Nida, The Analysis of Grammatical Constituents. Language 24 (1948), 168-77.
  - (4) H.A.Gleason, An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics, 133-140.
  - (5) L.Hjelmslev, Prolegomena, p.13-25.
  - (6) C.E.Bazell, The Fundamental Syntactic Relations. Časopis pro Moderní Filologii, 33 (1949), 9-15.
  - (7) cf. p.299-300.
  - (8) cf. 5.24 and also 3.13 where use of the term 'dependentia' (and also 'determinatio') is discussed.
  - (9) The 'schools' of de Saussure and Hjelmslev have already been mentioned en passant in this chapter.



there is no real point of contact between them (1), though we have pointed, in the descriptions of the partes orationis and their syntax, to certain isolated similarities.

There is no point of contact between the Modistae and the Prague school, especially since so much of Prague theoretical work was applied to phonological analysis. Certain features of London theory, e.g. the use of collocation (2), the need for contextual statements, are found also in the work of the Modistae (though obviously under a different title), but the main feature of London theory, i.e. prosodic analysis, cannot be seen at all in the Modistae (3). It happens that one of the features

- (1) It is interesting to note that many leading linguists of the 20th century have come to their conception of linguistics as a result of influence by other theories which are not necessarily linguistic at all. The Modistae similarly were influenced by other disciplines which affected their conception of language, although in their case this influence came to dominate their conception of grammar to the extent of its becoming subordinate to the 'parent' discipline. These influences can be listed very simply thus:-

de Saussure	Durkheim - sociology.
Bloomfield	Watson - behaviourist psychology.
Sapir	Boas - anthropology.
Troubetzkoy	early studies in ethnology and ethnography.
Firth	Malinowski - anthropology.
Modistae	Scholastics - philosophy.

- (2) It is worthy of mention that the application of Firth's collocational analysis was a means of throwing a great deal of light on Modistic technical vocabulary.
- (3) For terms such as collocation, contextualisation, levels, prosodic analysis, cf. J.R.Firth, Papers in Linguistics, and A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory, Studies in Linguistic Analysis, p.1-32.



of London theory is that the analysis can begin at the 'word' or 'piece' level (1); it can be argued that Modistic analysis too takes place at these levels but this cannot be considered as in any way similar to London theory, since in the one case such usage is deliberate but in the other it is fortuitous and indeed carries with it the implication of denying anything, as Priscian had done, at any level prior to the word (2). Similarities between Modistic syntactic analysis and modern IC analysis have already been suggested (3), but it must be pointed out that this is more the work of the followers of Bloomfield rather than of Bloomfield himself. Bloomfield's terms 'endocentric' and 'exocentric' constructions (4) have been used to describe Thomas's constructions but this does not suggest any similarity - and indeed there is none - between Modistic and Bloomfield's analytical procedures (5).

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- (1) cf. K.L. Pike, Interpenetration of Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax. Reports for the Eighth International Congress of Linguists, p.337-8.
- (2) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.64.
- (3) cf. p. 506: 508: 556.
- (4) L. Bloomfield, Language, p.194-6.
- (5) It should, however, be pointed out that the Modistae and Bloomfield both preached and practised a very rigorous approach to grammatical theory and analysis - it may indeed be said that this was at one and the same time their strength and their weakness.



On the whole, Bloomfield's theories are poles apart from the Modistae whose theories would have been dismissed by Bloomfield and his followers as 'mentalistic', since one of their best-known features has been their demand that linguistic criteria only should be used in any linguistic definition.

In the section on syntax (1), we saw that Thomas, by means of his various types of constructions, created a very elementary form of Immediate Constituent analysis of sentence structures. This is an analytical procedure developed by American scholars, followers of Bloomfield, whereby the structure of utterances can be analysed in terms of the interrelationships between the words and constructions which make up the utterance, and syntactic analysis consists therefore largely in finding the different Immediate Constituents and the relationships between them (2). It would be wrong to make anything more of this than a possible similarity between this type of syntactic analysis and Modistic syntactic theory and practice, since Thomas uses only four types of simple construction (3), and does not discuss more complex types of sentences. It is not possible, therefore, to envisage any construction in Thomas's scheme any more complicated than a sentence of the type NVN with expansions of these three elements to produce a sentence of

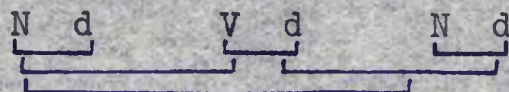
(1) cf. 5.24.

(2) H.A. Gleason, Op.cit., p.133.

(3) cf. 5.2411, 5.2413, 5.2421, 5.2423.



the type Nd Vd Nd (d = determinant), which could therefore be thought of the following ICs:



The Modistae express these relations by means of the various dependences between the constructibles (1), so that in an NV or a VN construction, the V element is the dependent of the N element, whereas in an Nd or a Vd construction, the 'd' element is both the dependent and also the determinant of the N or V determinable.

This shows a more definite similarity to the theories of dependences and fundamental relations found in the work of Hjelmslev (2) and Bazell (1). Bazell has evolved a much more sophisticated and at the same time a much more concise and economic scheme of relationships by means of his relationships of determinant-determinatum and superordinate-subordinate, the superordinate-subordinate relationship being a means of stating more specifically the relationship of the determinant to the determinatum. This is, of course, a much more economical way of stating the relationships, i.e. by means of one binary

- 1) cf. 5.24 et seq.
- 2) L. Hjelmslev, La structure morphologique (1939).  
L. Hjelmslev, Prolegomena (1943-1953).  
L. Hjelmslev, Structural Analysis of Language. Studia Linguistica 1 (1947), 69-78. In this lastnamed work, he states that "linguistics describes the relational pattern of language".
- 3) C.E. Bazell, The Fundamental Syntactic Relations. Časopis pro Moderní Filologii, 33 (1949), 9-15.



would have to describe in an analysis of Latin, and however much we may criticise the Modistae for their non-formal grammar, they were remarkably consistent in their procedure and did achieve a coherent grammatical system, even though their very consistency may have left them at times with the necessity of justifying themselves by means of lengthy and subtle explanations (1). Once the analysis of the modes of signifying of the partes orationis was complete, then and only then could the syntax of these partes in terms of their modes of signifying be described; this is certainly true of Thomas and Martin of Dacia (2), and it seems that it would almost certainly be true also of Siger and Michel de Marbais (3) if they had completed their work; they do anticipate syntactical matters somewhat by adding a further feature to the description of the various modes, both essential and accidental, i.e. the 'principium constructionis' (4) which makes of each mode of signifying either a potential syntactical element (5) or else

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- 1) cf. p. 328-30. Reference has already been made to the arguments used to justify 'privations' and 'negations' as nomina.
  - 2) H. Roos, *Op.cit.*, p.141.
  - 3) Siger refers at the end of his discussion of the nomen to a projected section on syntax, cf. p. 512-3.
  - 4) cf. 5.212.
  - 5) In Thomas's scheme, the accidental modes only are respective or absolute; Thomas, furthermore, was not averse to using syntactic criteria in his definitions of the partes orationis and the modes of signifying (cf. his discussion of persona tempus as accidental modes of the verb, 5.1122), but he did not make a systematic use of syntax in the way that Siger used 'principium constructiones' to classify the different modes in terms of their syntactic or non-syntactic functions.



a feature which is a derivational element (1), e.g. figura, and has itself no separate syntactic identity (2). Modistic syntax consists of three stages (3), i.e. i) constructio which describes the combinations of elements or constructibles which can form a construction, ii) congruitas, which defines the relationships, i.e. the internal concord of gender, number, case, person, etc. between the constructibles (4), and the collocations of the constructibles in their contexts of situation (5), and iii) perfectio, which produces the complete construction by requiring, in addition to the features characteristic of constructio and congruitas, the rection of suppositum and appositum, by means of which only can a complete mental concept be properly expressed and understood.

Perfectio represents in fact the whole purpose of syntax and goes one step further than the final principle of construing which, as was seen (6) aimed to express a compound concept of the mind. Whereas the 'principium finale' was a realisation of the combination of constructibles, etc., perfectio, as we have seen (7), represents all these but demands something more,

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- 1) Reference has been made to the synchronic derivational nature of the absolute modes, which themselves may not have any syntactic function but do not however affect the syntax of the pars orationis to which they belong, cf. p. 246.
  - 2) Siger's specific mode is classed as an absolute mode but it is not a derivational element: the specific mode merely serves to define the pars orationis in question.
  - 3) cf. p. 530.
  - 4) cf. p. 533.
  - 5) J.R. Firth, Papers in Linguistics, for a discussion of these terms.
  - 6) cf. 5.224
  - 7) cf. 5.233



which is the combination of certain constructibles, i.e. suppositum and appositum to produce a 'constructio perfecta' which will be complete since the member constructibles will be 'congruent' (1) and will have no incomplete dependence (2), and furthermore such a construction is capable not only of expressing a compound mental concept, but also of creating complete understanding in the mind of the hearer, which is the whole object of syntax and grammar (3). Thus we see the whole grammatical process of the Modistae, starting with the 'vox' and ending with the completed sentence.

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1) cf. p. 97: 535: 544.

2) cf. p. 544-5.

3) Siger de Courtrai, p. 93: grammatica est sermocinalis scientia, sermonem et passionem eius in communi ad exprimendum principaliter mentis conceptus per sermonem coniunctum considerans.



Chapter VI.Conclusion.6.0 The Relevance of Modistic Theory to Modern Linguistic Theories.

Since the days of the ancient Greeks, one method of describing and classifying the words of a language has been by means of the method traditionally known as "parts-of-speech" analysis. Modern linguists have continued to use this type of analysis, - except that they substitute 'word-class' or 'form-class' for 'part-of-speech', - but attach much less importance to this type of analysis than the grammarians of the Middle Ages, for instance, did; for the mediaevals, the description of the parts of speech or partes orationis of a language was grammatical analysis par excellence (1).

The great changes between the methods of the modern structural linguist and the traditional grammarian - (the term 'traditional' being used here to include all grammarians from Greek antiquity to the present who do not use structural methods of analysis) are: 1) the change in criteria from logical, philosophical, semantic, or a mixture of semi-formal and notional criteria (2) to strictly formal linguistic

- (1) Roos describes the 'modi significandi' as "Lehre der Wortklassen".
- (2) cf. R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.67, for his description of Priscian's criteria, i.e. "criteria of formal structure and behaviour, alleged 'meanings' and philosophical abstractions".



criteria (1), - such procedures may consider meaning as a secondary criterion, but the primary criteria will be the establishment of the formal scatter and the syntactic functions of the word-classes of the language in question (2);

ii) the modern linguist no longer seeks a universal grammar or system of word-classes established by means of universal criteria and which can be applied equally well in theory to any language (3). The Modistae, on the other hand, guided by the metaphysical theories of their contemporaries, believed that their system of word-classes, constructed, as they imagined, on the universality of the world of reality and exemplified by means of the idealised language of learning in the Middle Ages, i.e. Latin, was genuinely universal.

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- 1) cf. L. Hjelmslev, Principes de grammaire générale. p.298: pour qu'une catégorie ait une existence réelle du point de vue grammatical, il faut qu'elle se définisse par des critères de forme, et non pas par des critères purement sémantiques.
  - 2) R.H. Robins, Op. cit., p. 94
  - 3) C.E. Bazell, Linguistic Form, insists on the need for the existence and analysis of the lexical categories of a language, but denies quite categorically that it is possible to draw up categories which will apply to all languages: "definitions intended for application to all languages, can never be complete. The supposition that they might be, gave rise to that most ridiculous of pseudo-problems, the question 'whether there are categories common to all languages'. Do all languages have a category of nouns? It is possible to define the noun in opposition to the verb, to the pronoun, or to any other part of speech. But it is not possible to define it in opposition to all possible parts of speech, for there is no limit to the possibilities. Hence the question cannot be answered."



The discovery in more recent years of languages outside the Indo-European family of languages, has shown that the analysis by means of the parts of speech can no longer be considered as a universal grammar, since the parts of speech themselves, so much a part of European grammatical scholarship since ancient Greece, are by no means universal in human speech (1).

We must, however, be careful to distinguish between general and universal grammars; Sapir (2) maintained that each language has its own scheme of word-classes, but adds, and this seems also to be the argument put forward by Robins (3), that it is becoming increasingly clear that most languages use the categories of 'noun' and 'verb'. It may, therefore, be possible to proclaim the universality of 'noun' and 'verb' as grammatical categories, but the criteria for them, as for the other parts of speech, although formal, will be different in the case of every language; this is in keeping with Professor Hjelmslev's definition of general grammar (4).

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- (1) B.L. Whorf, Science and Linguistics. Language, Thought, and Reality, p.215-6, suggests that in Nootka "all words seem to us to be verbs...we have, as it were, a monistic view of nature that gives us only one class of word for all kinds of event."
- (2) E. Sapir, Language, p.118-19.
- (3) R.H. Robins, Noun and Verb in Universal Grammar. Language 28 (1952), 289-98.
- (4) L.Hjelmslev, La structure morphologique, p.92: la grammaire générale n'est pas une grammaire universelle, mais la théorie des réalisables et de leurs conditions.  
Roos is quite mistaken when he compares de Saussure and Hjelmslev to Martin and Dacia and by implication to the other Modistae by suggesting that the Modistae were attempting a Prolegomena of language. The Modistae were in fact seeking a universal grammatical theory applicable to any language; this is far from being the aim of de Saussure and Hjelmslev.



There is a tendency among modern linguists to ignore altogether the work of their predecessors or else to refer to it disparagingly as 'traditional' and dismiss it therefore as useless (1). Certainly, it would be easy to dismiss the theories of the Modistae as irrelevant to any modern theory, and yet there are, in the Modistic system, certain features which are not unlike some of the ideas expressed by modern linguists, and it is the object of this final chapter to indicate briefly some of these similarities. This must not be interpreted as a suggestion that modern linguists have derived these ideas from the Modistae, but merely that modern theorists, who after all are dealing with the same type of raw material as the Modistae, have introduced concepts which show a degree of similarity to those of the Modistae, and one of the justifications of a study of this nature by a linguist must be the possible relationship and relevance of the theories of the grammarians studies to the grammatical theories of today (2).

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(1) cf. L. Bloomfield, Language, Chapter I, where he discusses pre-20th century grammatical work.

(2) There is a danger that over-enthusiasm may lead one to imagine that these resemblances amount almost to renewals in modern theories of ideas put forward by the Modistae and then forgotten. To do this would be to suggest that the Modistae were much better grammarians than they were in actual fact, and it would also minimise the very important advances that modern linguistics has made during the past 50 years. However, the analysis and description of modern concepts have no part in this study; reference will be made to them in order to demonstrate a possible likeness between them and some feature of Modistic grammar.



Very early on, it was suggested that the study of grammatical theories in the Middle Ages provides a key to knowledge of the thought of the 12th and 13th centuries (1) and it might equally well be argued that an examination of the grammatical theories of the Middle Ages will tell us something of modern grammatical theories, if only in the negative sense that we may discover, by comparing them, what the modern linguist does not do and often why his theories and practices have changed.

There are inevitably a number of problems involved when we attempt to compare the theories of the Modistae to modern linguistic theory. The first is that a mere matter of 600 years at least separates them, and any grammatical theory, if it is to be considered a complete theory, must take some account of its intellectual background and the academic origins of its creators. It is almost trite to say that these factors were quite different in the Middle Ages from what they are today, and some of the inadequacies of the Modistic scheme can be attributed to the imperfections of the scholarly world in which they lived, e.g. the fact that their theories were conceived and worked out in terms of one language only, i.e. Latin, and that their own grammatical theory was derived from other theories which had themselves been established on the basis of one other language, i.e. Greek, of very similar structure. Modern linguistics owes

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(1) cf. p. 32 .



much of its achievement and development to work done in non-Indo-European languages, e.g. Bloomfield and Sapir in Amerindian languages, Troubetzkoy in the Caucasian languages, Firth in Asian and African languages (1).

Another problem, which is closely connected with the first and which renders comparison very difficult, is that the mediaeval view of man in his environment and the metaphysical theories of the world are entirely different from those of today (2); grammar was looked upon by the Modistae as dependent on the structure of reality, whereas today language

- (1) These names refer not so much to individual scholars but to the 'schools' of which they are considered to be the leaders.
- (2) Throughout the discussion of the grammatical theories, a great deal has been made of the fact that the Modistae created their grammatical doctrine from contemporary logical and metaphysical theories of reality. It has also been pointed out that this is really a case of putting the horse before the cart, and that in fact their conception of substance, the principles of their logic etc. were dictated by the structure of the language they were using to express these concepts.

This immediately brings to mind the Whorf-Sapir theory of linguistic relativity, which argues that "all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar". B.L. Whorf, Science and Linguistics. Language, Thought, and Reality, p.214. This is, of course, in diametric contrast to Modistic belief, but it does support the view that their metaphysics is controlled (as well as expressed) by their language, and this will account, in Whorf's view, for their metaphysical theories. Scholars have questioned Whorf's hypothesis, but Modistic theories and the relationships between grammar and reality are similarly questionable; it is no part, however, of this study to discuss Whorf's theories but to point out that here at least is one point of contact between the Modistae and one modern theorist.



is considered by most linguists as "part of human co-operation, part of social action" (1), and these conflicting views of grammar and grammatical analysis must be reconciled if any comparison is to be made.

Another factor involved in the comparison of two grammatical theories, such as those of the Modistae and modern theories, is that there is no one single linguistic theory today - this increases the difficulty of making a comparison, since a feature which may be acceptable to one school of thought will not necessarily be acceptable to another, e.g. the mixture of levels is required by one school of thought but condemned by another (2).

A further reason is that the logical and metaphysical theories which the mediaevals used as the basis for their grammatical theories, were themselves based on the structure of the language in which they were expressed - modern logic, like modern linguistics, has freed itself from the tutelage of traditional logic - traditional logic is no longer accepted today as anything more than one system of logic which is not by any means considered universal, as Aristotle's logic was in the Middle Ages.

Furthermore, and this is probably the most difficult problem of all, ~~that~~ it is not possible to transfer one

(1) R.H. Robins, A. & M., p.89.

(2) Levels analysis is part of London theory and of Pike's theory but is denied by most other American linguists.



theory onto another theory, since, in the case of grammar, so much more than the mere mechanics of description <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ involved. It can be argued, rightly so, that Hjelmslev has constructed his linguistic theory upon de Saussure's theory, but it would be quite mistaken to imagine that Hjelmslev's theory is not completely separate and distinct from de Saussure's, and in terms of a general linguistic theory, nothing is achieved by means of a "scissors and paste" comparison, i.e. by taking single features from one system and contrasting them with isolated features of another system.

Another factor which separates the Modistae from the grammarian of today is what might be called the need for 'total' descriptions; Firth has insisted that in any linguistic description everything must be taken into account (1), not only the purely linguistic levels of phonology and grammar, but also the sociological and contextual levels which are essential for any complete linguistic statement. The Modistae did not give us anything approaching such a complete analysis; they excluded phonetics altogether, and although they might be considered as possessing the rudiments of a phonological statement, they have nothing resembling the systematic phonological or morphological analysis which would be found in any modern structural description.

Reference has already been made by one modern scholar to the similarity between de Saussure's theory of 'le signe

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(1) J.R. Firth, The Technique of Semantics. Papers in Linguistics; also, A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory. Studies in Linguistic Analysis.



opposition, one member of which will be either the superordinate or the subordinate member (1), in contrast to the four constructions described by Thomas (2), i.e. the basic NV construction in which both the N and the V elements may have determinants, so that this construction may be either NV, or NdV, or NVd, or NdVd, and we have in addition the other constructions of VN and NN (3).

Similarly, Hjelmslev, by means of his relationships of solidarity, selection, and combination (4), has suggested a type of analysis which Thomas, with his relationships of principium-dependent (NV) and terminus-dependent (VN), had suggested (5), but in an obviously primitive form, and to

- 1) In Bazell's scheme, an attributive adjective and noun would be a dD (d = determinant, D = determinatum) relationship, the 'd' being the subordinate; in Thomas's scheme this would be a constructio intransitiva personarum with the noun as the determinable and the adjective as the determinant. In Bazell's scheme, a subject-predicate construction and a verb-object construction would be dD in the case of the SP construction and Dd in the case of the verb-object construction; in Thomas's scheme, two types of construction would be required to describe these relationships, i.e. a constructio intransitiva actuum for the SP construction and a constructio transitiva actuum for the verb-object construction, though in both constructions the verb would be the 'dependent' constructible. One of the many additional advantages of Bazell's system is that the terms 'transitive' and 'intransitive' are now free to be used in the sense that convention and tradition have given them.
- 2) constructio intransitiva actuum: constructio intransitiva personarum: constructio transitiva actuum: constructio transitiva personarum.
- 3) cf. 5.2411, 5.2413, 5.2421, 5.2423 for more detailed discussion and examples.
- 4) L. Hjelmslev, Prolegomena, p.15-25.
- 5) These terms and these constructions are discussed in more detail in 3.13 and 5.24, 5.241, 5.2411, 5.242 and 5.2421.



make any more of this would be to attach an undue and exaggerated importance to the theories of the Modistae in relation to these modern theories.

It would however be unfair to the Modistae to fail to point out how full of promise their syntactic theory was. Hjelmslev suggests in his Prolegomena (1) that syntax is concerned with the relations between categories only and described traditional syntax as the relations between 'variants' but glossematics as the relations between 'invariants'. Without seeking to exaggerate the originality of Modistic syntax, it is possible to see the first signs of a somewhat similar theory, if we consider the fundamental relations of principium-dependent or terminus-dependent of Thomas's scheme to be the 'invariants', since his syntactic theory is built around these basic relationships. It is, as we have just warned, dangerous to read too much into these faint similarities or to suggest that the Modistae proposed an analytical procedure which was anything more than the burgeonings of a syntactic theory constructed on the lines of an analysis of the type developed by Hjelmslev and Bazell.

Mention of these points of contact between Modistic and modern theories which are of interest to the student of the development of syntactic theory, is made at this length not so much to make analogies which are at best of doubtful value since they are taken out of context, but to stress the very important

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1) L. Hjelmslev, Prolegomena, p.54.



fact, that this study of the Modistae has brought to the fore one interesting and revealing feature; scholars have often referred to the importance of mediaeval syntactic theories, but there seems to be no competent account in modern linguistic literature of these syntactic theories. It is quite clear that the Modistae especially - and it would be interesting to compare their theories with the syntactic theories of other leading mediaeval grammarians, e.g. Peter Helias, Robert Kilwardby, Petrus Hispanus, etc. - had very original ideas about syntax, and indeed the only real relationship between Modistic theories generally and modern linguistic theories is to be found in certain aspects of their syntax. Similar features to Modistic theories of rection, of dependence and determination, and their rudimentary Immediate Constituent analysis are all to be found in modern theories, but obviously in a much more highly developed refined and systematic form free from all extra-linguistic criteria.

The value for the modern linguist of a study of the Modistae and the importance of their theories in relation to 20th century linguistic theories do not lie in their intrinsic value as contributions to general grammatical theory; apart from certain isolated features, Modistic grammatical theories and descriptive techniques would be discarded by most modern linguists, no matter what 'school' of linguistic doctrine they profess to belong to, since Modistic criteria <sup>are</sup> ~~are~~ essentially semantic and they never used formal linguistic criteria in any



systematic manner.

The real value of a study by the modern linguist of any group of grammarians of the past is that it affords an excellent picture of a grammatical theory established against a different intellectual and academic background. The justification of such a study by a linguist must be that the synchrony and diachrony of language (1) is reflected in the synchrony and diachrony of grammatical theory. To ignore one's past is an act of arrogance (2), and we must respect our predecessors and their contributions to linguistic science even if we do discard so much of their work. It is particularly appropriate to study the Modistae in this context, since they found themselves in an intellectual and academic atmosphere not unlike our own today. Grammatical study in

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- 1) These are terms used by de Saussure to define the difference between historical linguistics and descriptive linguistics. It is of some relevance here, at least as far as the procedure in analysing such as Jakobson and Martinet have refused to accept the distinctions between diachronic and synchronic linguistics as rigidly laid down, and have in fact proposed that the methods of synchronic linguistics should be applied to the description of diachronic linguistics. Similarly, in this study, there is a gap between the diachrony and synchrony of grammatical theory, but in this analysis of Modistic theories, modern synchronic analytical procedures have all along been adopted.
  - 2) Professor Firth is even more outspoken: "to dismiss two thousand years of linguistic study in Asia as well as in Europe as negligible except in so far as it contributed to comparative grammar is just plain stupid". cf. *The Semantics of Linguistic Science. Papers in Linguistics*, p.139.



the 13th century, after many generations of association (and often subordination) to literary studies, enjoyed an independence it had never known before, and if it did not achieve the autonomy which linguists today claim for linguistic science - though this can be ascribed to the general inadequacies of the intellectual life of the period rather than to the grammatical theorists in particular, - the Modistae did succeed in making (and thereby justifying) the study of grammar an independent discipline. Linguistics today has renewed itself and incorporated many ideas from its past; it is therefore proper that we should study the attempts of grammarians of another age to create a theory of grammar and a descriptive procedure against an intellectual and academic background and as part of a body of knowledge which are so different from the background and the body of knowledge of the modern linguist.



Appendices.

- Appendix A: A brief comparison of the theories and procedures of Siger de Courtrai and Thomas of Erfurt.
- Appendix B: Definitions of the modes used by Siger de Courtrai and Thomas of Erfurt.
- Appendix C: Diagrammatic expositions of the metalanguage, the different partes orationis and the syntactic theories of Siger de Courtrai and Thomas of Erfurt.
- Appendix D: Diagrammatic expositions of the Modistic analyses of the declinable and indeclinable partes orationis.
- Appendix E: Glossary.
- Appendix F: Bibliography:
- (a) Texts:
  - (b) The mediaeval background:
  - (c) The history of grammar:
  - (d) Modern Linguistics.



## Appendix A

Throughout this thesis the many similarities between Thomas and Siger have been stressed: the closeness between them is much more one of doctrine than of organisation, but it should not be imagined that their grammatical doctrine is always exactly alike. A close comparison is not possible at every stage in view of the incompleteness of Siger's work. Siger's "Summa Modorum Significandi" consists in effect of a preamble, a detailed description of the nomen and verb, a shorter account of the participle and an incompleted account of the pronoun: Siger's Sophisma "O Magister" contains an incomplete description of the indeclinable partes - incomplete since he has nothing to say about the accidental modes of these indeclinable partes: in addition, Siger has no section on syntax, though he does refer to a projected section on syntax at the end of his discussion of the nomen. Thomas's "Grammatica Speculativa" is complete and can be considered a model of a grammatical treatise in the style of the Modistae.

The purpose of this appendix is to draw attention to the differences between Siger and Thomas, differences of organisation or doctrine. The order of their texts has been closely followed in making this comparison: this is mentioned specifically here, since the most important difference between them is their presentation of the essential modes of signifying. A diagram has been added at the end of this appendix to show the classification of certain features by Donatus and Priscian, and Siger and



Thomas; the blank spaces indicate that the feature in question is absent from a particular grammarian's description, e.g. Siger does not include 'persona' as an accidental mode of the nomen.

In their metalanguage, Siger and Thomas vary in that the sequence of *modus essendi* to *modus significandi* is made by a different number of intervening stages: Siger proceeds from the *modus essendi* to the *modus intelligendi*, from the *modus intelligendi* to the *modus signandi*, and from the *modus signandi* to the *modus significandi*, whereas Thomas has only the *modus essendi*, *modus intelligendi* and *modus significandi* as the stages of the same sequence. Thomas reduces the number of intervening stages by attributing to the *signum* the potentiality of signifying (*ratio significandi*) which makes it into a 'dictio' (in Siger's scheme the *dictio* possesses the *modus signandi*) and also the potentiality of consignifying (*ratio consignificandi*), i.e. signifying syntactically, which makes it into a *pars orationis*. Possession of the potentiality of consignifying implies automatically possession of the *modus significandi*, and in both Siger and Thomas the characteristic of the *pars orationis* is its possession of the *modus significandi*.

The principal difference in the organisation of their material rests in their descriptions of the essential modes of the *partes orationis*. Siger sets up his essential modes as a combination of a general mode and a specific mode: the general mode is a description of the essence of the *pars* which it shares with another *pars* - (this has been described in the body of the



thesis as constituting an 'archipars'); the specific mode describes the essence or that aspect of the essence by means of which it is distinguished from all the other partes orationis. Siger has nothing more to say about the essential modes and proceeds to his description of the accidental modes.

Thomas's analytical procedure is quite different as far as the essential modes are concerned: he divides the essential mode into generalissimus, subalternus and specialissimus. The doctrine of his modus generalissimus is the same as the combination of Siger's general and specific modes, but Thomas is not concerned to stress the similarities between the general mode of one pars and the general mode of another pars. He seems more concerned about the application of the matter-form contrast to the modus generalissimus by means of these two parts, and the part which, in Siger's scheme, would be the general mode, is in Thomas's scheme the 'matter', and the part which is equivalent to Siger's specific mode, becomes the 'form' in Thomas's scheme.

Thomas then divides his modus generalissimus into the modus subalternus, which he uses to state and describe various types of the pars in question, e.g. in the nomen, the subaltern modes represent the nomen proprium, nomen substantivum, and the nomen adiectivum: the modus subalternus is divided into modus specialissimus which is a more detailed and sometimes exhaustive inventory of the words which make up the type of pars represented by the modus subalternus. This division of generalissimus, subalternus and specialissimus, and the more detailed enumeration



of the types of word which constitute a pars orationis, is totally absent from Siger.

Another difference between Siger and Thomas results from their different methods of describing the essence of a pars: in the indeclinable pars Siger maintains the general-specific contrast, the general mode being shared by all four indeclinable partes, i.e. modus disponentis, and the specific modes to differentiate the indeclinable partes. Thomas abandons the two-part definition of the modus generalissimus; his definition of the modus generalissimus of each indeclinable pars becomes the equivalent of what, in Siger's scheme, is the specific mode. He retains the modus subalternus and specialissimus (except in the Interlectio) and uses these modes to specify the various types of word making up the pars in question.

Siger and Thomas both make use in the nomen of Donatus's accident of 'qualitas' divided into propria and appellativa: their presentation is, however, quite different. Siger describes 'qualitas', 'substantivum' and 'adiectivum', as three separate accidental modes of the nomen. Thomas describes the same feature by means of the modus subalternus and specialissimus which are essential modes. Thomas organises the material which Donatus had described as an 'accident' of the nomen by means of two sets of subaltern modes which we might call 'major' and 'minor'. The two 'major' subaltern modes constitute the nomen appellativum and the nomen proprium: the nomen appellativum is divided into the two 'minor' subaltern modes which constitute the nomen substantivum and the nomen adiectivum. The nomen proprium, nomen



substantivum and nomen adiectivum are then described and specified in more detail by means of modi specialissimi. It must be stressed that the difference here between Siger and Thomas is one of organisation and presentation.

There are a number of other minor differences between Siger and Thomas; Thomas, for instance, includes persona as an accidental mode of the nomen (as well as of the verb), whereas Siger does not introduce the idea of persona at all into his description of the nomen. Thomas and Siger also differ in their analysis of figura: Thomas describes it as made up of three sub-modes, i.e. simple, composite and decomposite, whereas Siger uses only simple and composite, and considers decomposite a sub-species of composite.

Siger describes 'gradus' as an accidental mode of the nomen, whereas Thomas says nothing about the feature as such but merely lists 'positivus', 'comparativus', and 'superlativus' as types of adjective which are to be found among the modi specialissimi of the nomen and which derive from the 'minor' subaltern mode of 'modus adiacentis'.

These are, we maintain, minor differences, in contrast to the major difference of their different presentation of the essential modes which affects their descriptions of all the partes orationis.

There are, however, a number of differences which are matters of doctrine rather than of organisation, i.e. features such as casus in the nomen, and compositio and significatio in the verb.

In the discussion on 'casus' in the nomen, it was pointed out that case theories had been developed in Greece, in



Byzantium and in Rome. Siger, despite this long tradition, seems to have been content with a definition of case along the line of Priscian's definition, i.e. he accepts the semi-formal distinctions of Priscian and restates them in his own semantic terms. He does not, however, attempt to systematise the different uses of case in order to produce a theory and contents himself with an inventory of some of the uses of certain cases in Latin. He also suggests a relationship by contrast between the nominative and oblique cases: this is a theory which derives from the Stoic grammarians and which, as Hjelmslev points out in his "Catégorie des Cas", became the basis for most theories of case in the Western world. This theory was adopted by Apollonius and Thrax, and it is well known that Priscian based his work on Apollonius, so that this will account for Siger's description of case in such terms, but even this he does not develop consistently. It must not be imagined that Thomas is much richer in his case theory, but although his theory shows a certain affinity to Stoic theory, he does at least attempt to produce something new. This can be described as a case theory dependent on syntactic use with word order as the distinctive or <sup>sometimes</sup> non-distinctive feature.

Another important difference between Thomas and Siger refers to their use or non-use of the accidental modes of compositio and significatio. It is not enough to say that Siger does not use these accidental modes, because they do represent something very vital to Thomas's description of the verb and can be considered one of his most valuable contributions to mediaeval grammatical theory: the distinctive feature of the essence of



the verb which distinguishes it from all the other partes orationis was, as we saw, the modus distantis. Thomas conceived compositio as the means of offsetting the 'damage' done by distantia, and the basic construction of the N V (subject-predicate) type therefore became possible in Thomas's scheme by means of compositio which he uses to create the relationship between the N element and the V element. As a balance to this, Thomas used significatio to establish the relationship in the V N type of construction which is the other basic construction type, and on these constructions Thomas constructs his entire syntactic theory. Thomas is thus using syntactic criteria to define certain features of the verb, and this fact, rather than the fact that Siger omitted these two accidental modes, stresses the difference in their doctrines.

It is difficult, if indeed possible, to draw any comparisons between their syntactic theories, since Siger's account is incomplete: it was suggested in the section on syntax that Siger's theories, if they had come down to us, would have been very much the same as Thomas's. There is, however, one feature in Siger's descriptive scheme which is absent from Thomas: Siger describes certain modes, both essential and accidental, as 'principia constructionis'. This is a device he uses to indicate that the pars, to which this particular mode belongs, is a constructible element and that this mode represents one of its syntactic



functions.

Thomas too uses on certain occasions, syntactic criteria at the pre-syntactic level, e.g. in his definition of a pars or a mode of a pars, but never in quite so systematic a manner as Siger's use of 'principium constructionis'.



Pars	Feature	Donatus	Priscian	Siger	Thomas
<u>Nomen</u>	casus	accidental	accidental	accidental	accidental
	genus	"	"	"	"
	numerus	"	"	"	"
	figura	"	"	"	"
	species		"	"	"
	persona				"
	qualitas	"		"	essential
	comparatio	"		"	"
<u>Verbum</u>	tempus	accidental	accidental	accidental	accidental
	coniugatio	"	"	"	"
	genus	"	"	"	"
	numerus	"	"	"	"
	figura	"	"	"	"
	persona	"	"	"	"
	qualitas	"			"
	modus	{ " } <sup>(1)</sup>	"	"	{ " }
	species	{ " }	"	"	{ " }
	compositio				"
	significatio				"
<u>Partic- ipium</u>	genus	accidental	accidental	accidental	accidental
	significatio	"	"	"	"
	casus	"	"	"	"
	persona	"	"	"	"
	tempus	"	"	"	"
	numerus	"	"	"	"
	figura	"	"	"	"
<u>Pro- nomen</u>	persona	accidental	accidental	<del>accidental</del> <sup>(2)</sup>	accidental
	genus	"	"	"	"
	numerus	"	"	"	"
	figura	"	"	"	"
	casus	"	"		"
	species		"		"
	qualitas	"			essential
<u>Adver- bium</u>	significatio	accidental	accidental		essential
	comparatio	"	"		accidental
	figura	"	"		"
	species		"		"
<u>Coniun- ctio</u>	potestas	accidental	accidental		essential
	figura	"	"		accidental
	ordo	"	"		"
	species		"		"
<u>Praepo- sitio</u>	casus	accidental	accidental		essential
<u>Inter- iectio</u>	significatio	accidental	accidental		essential

1) The brackets are used to indicate that modus and species are sub-modes of qualitas.

2) The blanks in this section of Siger's work result from the incompleteness of his "Summa".



Appendix B.Definitions of the modes used by Siger de Courtrai and Thomas of Erfurt.Siger de Courtrai

modus essendi = proprietates rerum seu entium.

modus intelligendi activus = modus quo intellectus comprehendit modum essendi seu proprietatem ipsius rei.

modus intelligendi passivus = ipse modus essendi ab ipso intellectu apprehensus seu modus intelligendi relatus ad modum essendi.

modus signandi activus = ratio quaedam seu ens rationis concessum voci ab intellectu secundum quod talis vox talem rem signat per quam rationem signandi vox formaliter dicitur dictio.

modus signandi passivus = ipsa res mediante ratione signandi passiva per vocem signata seu ratio signandi relata ad ipsam rem.

modus significandi activus = ratio concessa voci ab intellectu secundum quod talis vox talem modum essendi significat.

modus significandi passivus = ipse modus essendi per vocem, mediante modo significandi active significatus, seu modus significandi relatus ad modum essendi.

modus significandi essentialis = modus significandi conferens ad essentiam partis vel aliquorum ipsius partis.

Thomas of Erfurt

modus essendi = rei proprietates absolute.

modus intelligendi activus = ratio concipiendi, qua mediante intellectus rei proprietates significat, concipit, vel apprehendit.

modus intelligendi passivus = modus, sive proprietates rei, prout est per vocem significata.

modus significandi activus = modus, sive proprietates vocis ab intellectu sibi concessa, mediante qua vox proprietatem rei significat.

modus significandi passivus = modus, sive proprietates rei, prout est per vocem significata.

modus significandi essentialis = per quem pars orationis habet simpliciter esse, vel secundum genus, vel secundum speciem.



Siger de Courtrai

modus significandi essentialis generalis = modus significandi pertinens ad essentiam plurium partium orationis sicut substantia ad nomen et ad pronomen.

modus significandi essentialis specificus = modus significandi qui additus modo significandi generali constituit speciem, ut qualitas in nomine.

modus significandi accidentalis = modus significandi adveniens alicui post suum completum esse.

modus significandi absolutus = qui non conceduntur dictioni in comparatione ad modum significandi alterius dictionis sed magis ut vox mediantibus illis designet talem modum essendi circa rem. Isti modi non sunt principium constructionis quia non sunt principium unionis dictionis cum dictione.

modus significandi respectivus = qui conceduntur dictioni in comparatione ad modum significandi alterius dictionis eis proportionalem et tales sunt principium constructionis quia sunt principium unionis constructibilis cum constructibili.

Thomas of Erfurt

modus significandi essentialis generalissimus = qui est de essentia partis orationis et cuiuslibet suppositi sub se contenti.

modus significandi essentialis subalternus = qui est de essentia suppositorum illius partis, nec generalissime, nec specialissime, sed medio modo se habens.

modus significandi essentialis specialissimus = qui est de essentia quorundam suppositorum illius partis.

modus significandi accidentalis = qui advenit parti post eius esse completum, non dans esse simpliciter parti, nec secundum genus, nec secundum speciem.

modus significandi absolutus = per quem unum constructibile non habet respectum ad alterum, sed solum ad rei proprietatem.

modus significandi respectivus = per quem unum constructibile habet respectum non solum ad rei proprietatem, sed etiam per quem unum constructibile habet respectum ad alterum.

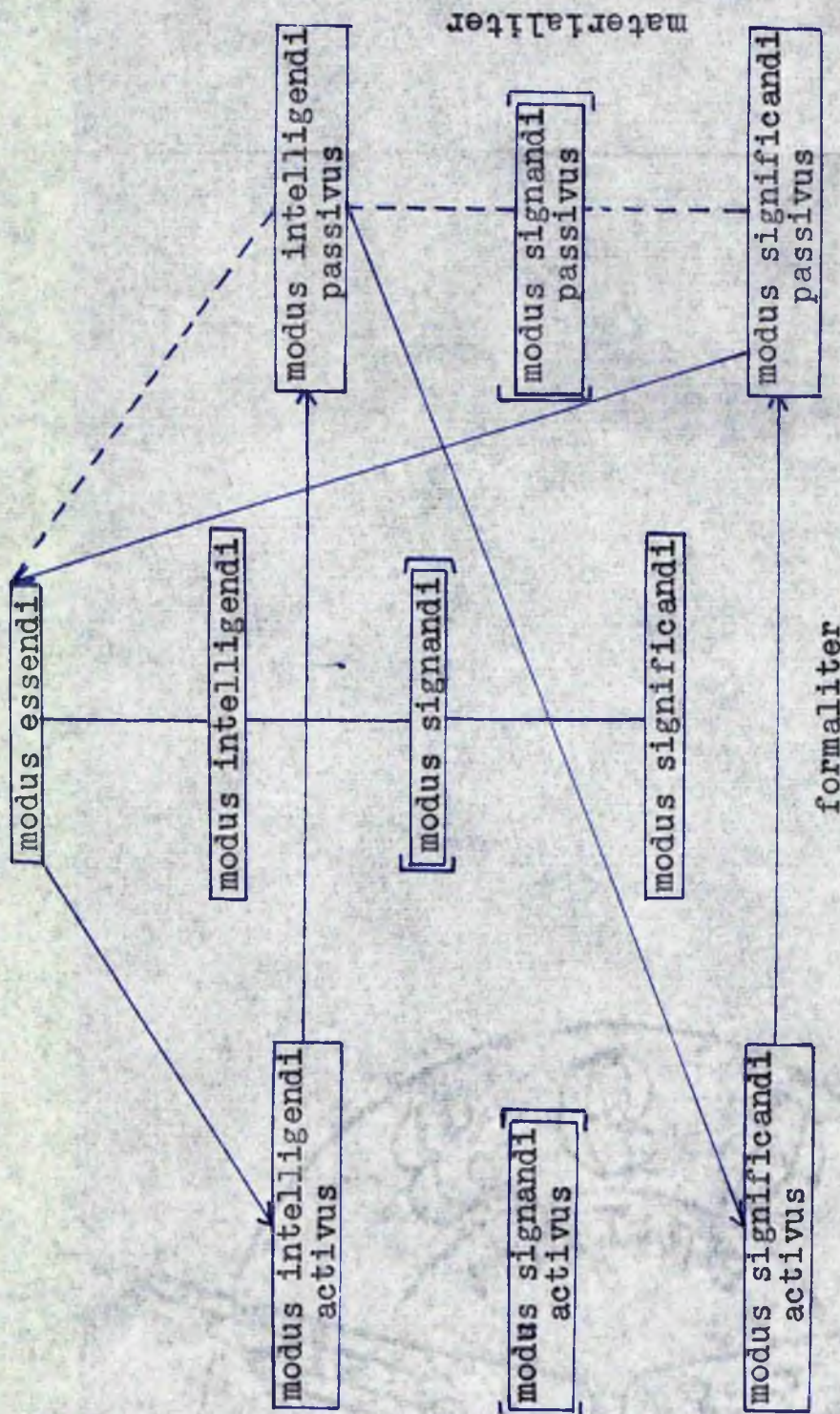


Appendix C.

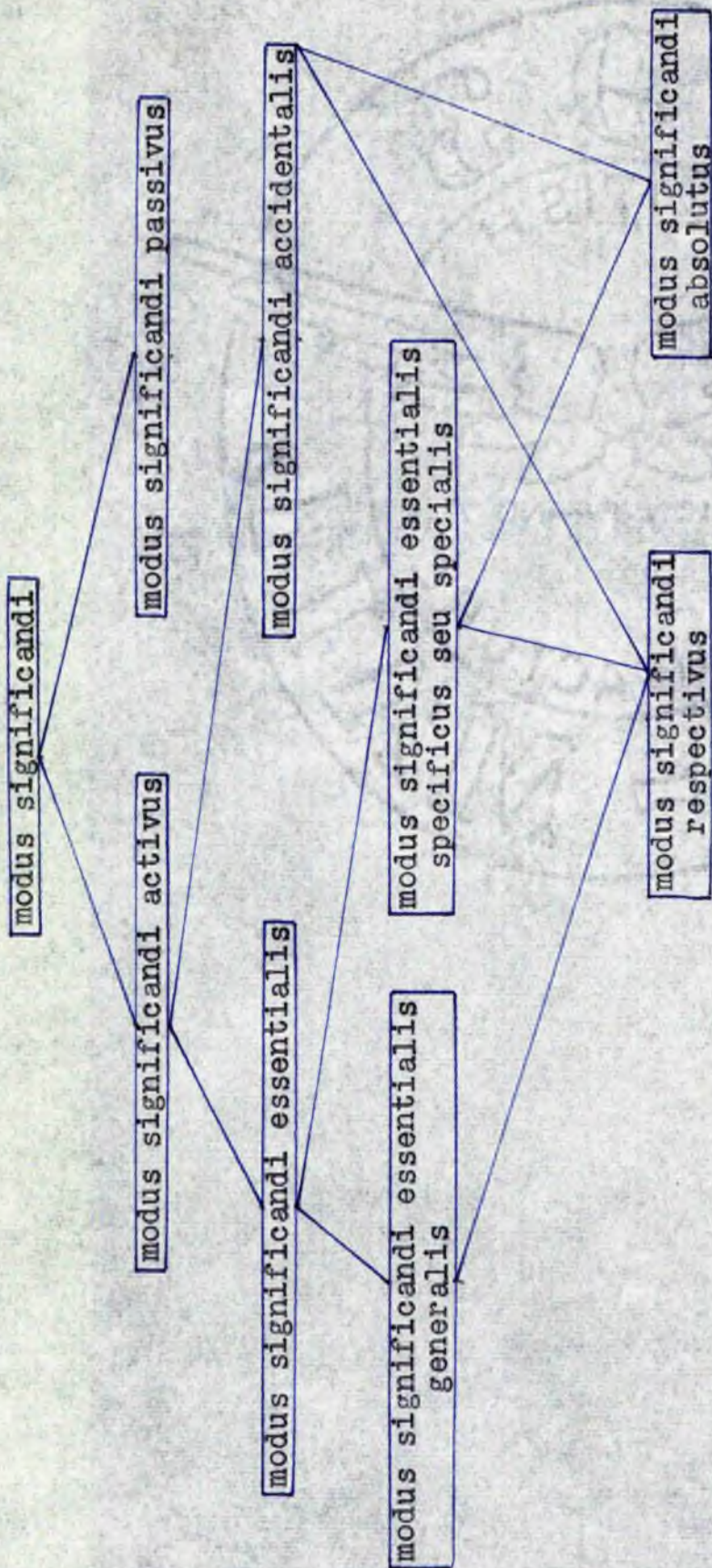
Diagrammatic expositions of the Metalanguage, the different partes orationis, and the syntactic theories of Siger de Courtrai and Thomas of Erfurt.

- a) Metalanguage.
- b) Nomen.
- c) Verbum.
- d) Participium.
- e) Pronomen.
- f) Adverbium.
- g) Coniunctio.
- h) Praepositio.
- i) Interiectio.
- j) Diasynthetica.

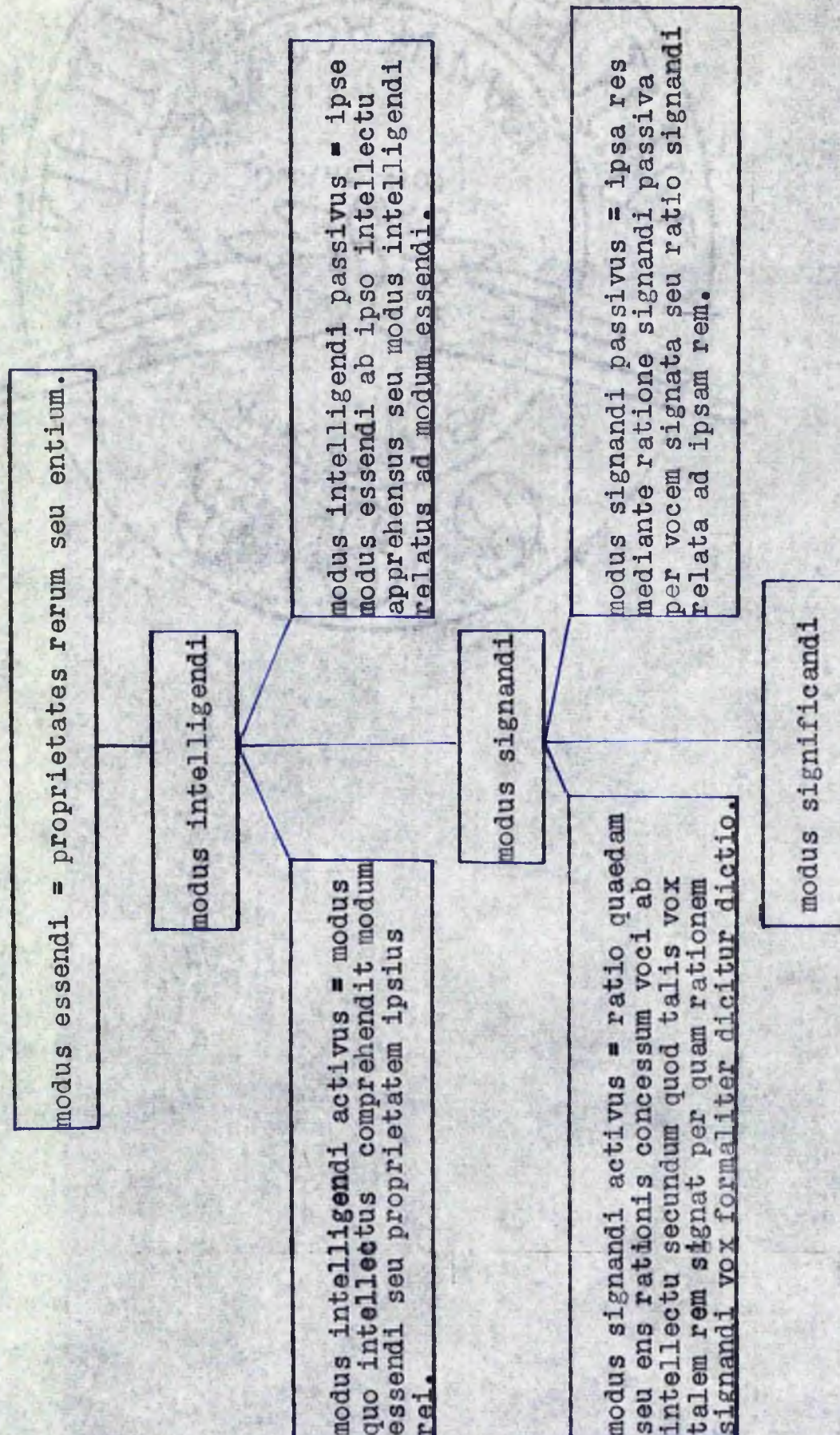














modus significandi

modus significandi activus = ratio concessa voci ab intellectu secundum quod talis vox talem modum essendi significat.

modus significandi passivus = ipse modus essendi per vocem, mediante modo significandi activo significatus, seu modus significandi relatus ad modum essendi.

modus significandi essentialis = modus significandi conferens ad essentiam partis vel aliquorum ipsius partis.

modus significandi accidentalis = modus significandi adveniens alicui post suum completum esse.

modus significandi essentialis generalis = modus significandi pertinens ad essentiam plurium partium orationis sicut substantia ad nomen et ad pronomen.

modus significandi essentialis specificus = modus significandi qui additus modo significandi generali constituit speciem, ut qualitas in nomine.

modus significandi respectivus = qui conceduntur dictioni in comparatione ad modum significandi alterius dictionis eis proportionalem et tales sunt principium constructionis quia sunt principium unionis constructibilis cum constructibili.

modus significandi absolutus = qui non conceduntur dictioni in comparatione ad modum significandi alterius dictionis sed magis ut vox mediantibus illis designet talem modum modum essendi circa rem. Isti modi non sunt principium constructionis quia non principium unionis dictionis cum dictione.



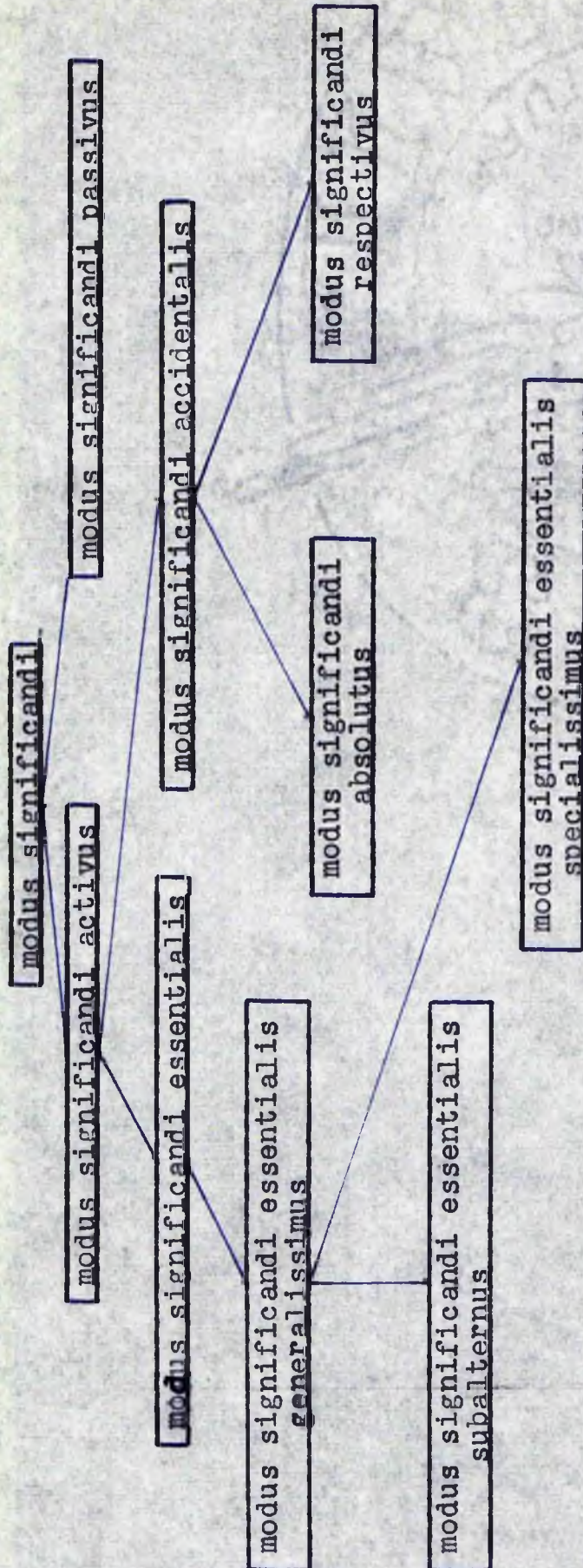
Modus significandi				Modus significandi passivus
Modus significandi activus			modus significandi accidentalialis	
modus significandi respectivus	modus significandi essentialis	modus significandi generalis		casus tempus genus modus gradus numerus persona coniugatio qualitas
	modus significandi specificus			
modus significandi absolutus			species figura	

Siger de Courtai

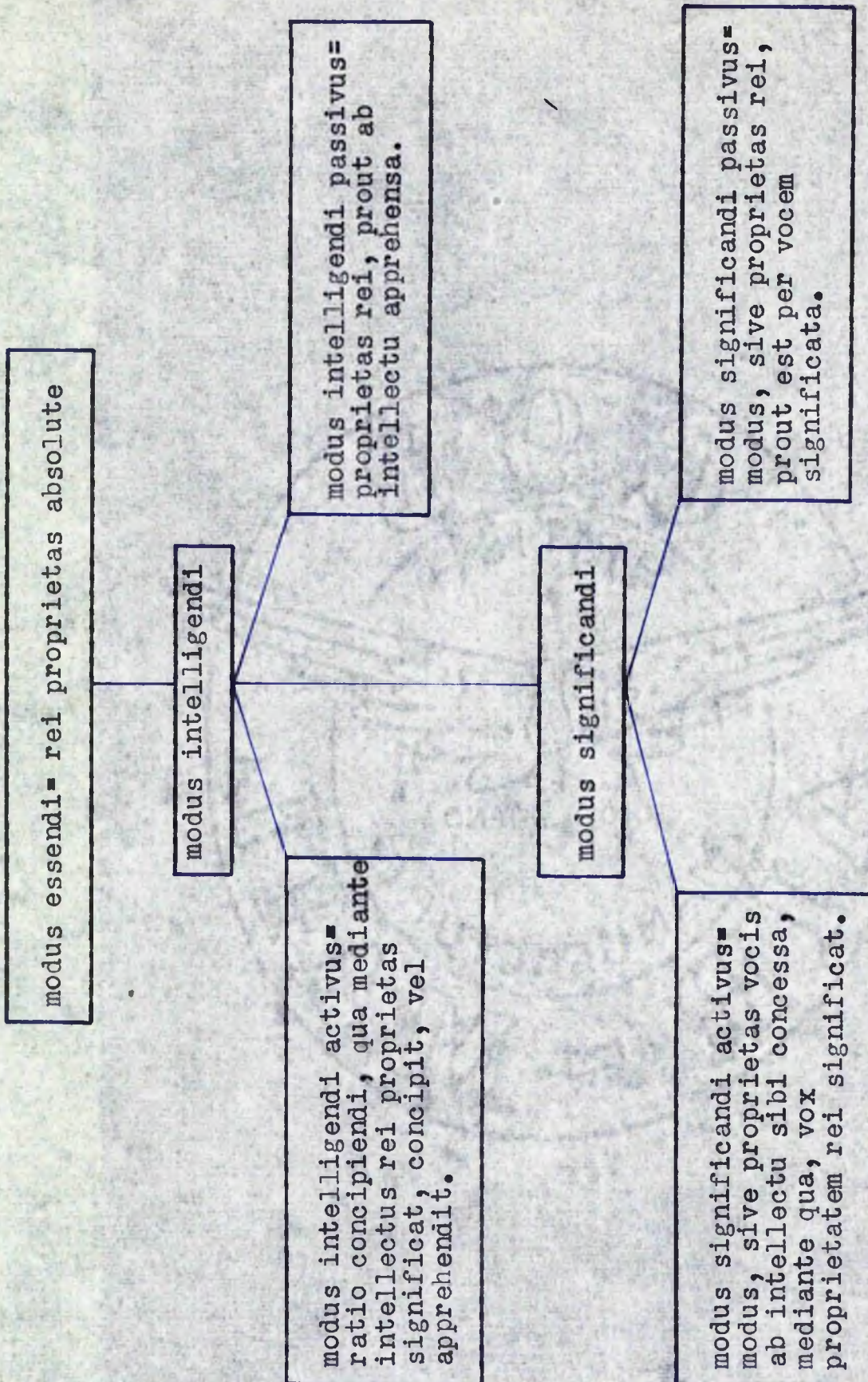
Metallanguage -

Modus significandi











modus significandi activus

modus significandi essentialis= per quem pars orationis habet simpliciter esse vel secundum genus, vel secundum speciem.

modus significandi essentialis generalissimus= qui est de essentia partis orationis et cuiuslibet suppositi sub se contenti.

modus significandi essentialis subalternus= qui est de essentia suppositorum illius partis, nec generalissime, nec specialissime, sed medio modo habens.

modus significandi essentialis specialissimus= qui est de essentia quorundam suppositorum illius partis.

modus significandi accidentalis= qui advenit parti post eius esse completum.

modus significandi absolutus= dicitur ille, per quem unum constructibile non habet respectum ad alterum, sed solum ad rei proprietatem.

modus significandi respectivus= est per quem unum constructibile habet respectum non solum ad rei proprietatem, sed etiam per quem unum constructibile habet respectum ad alterum.



Modus significandi					Modus significandi passivus
Modus significandi activus					
modus significandi essentialis		modus significandi accidentalis			
modus significandi generalissimus	modus significandi subalternus	modus significandi specialissimus	modus significandi absolutus	modus significandi respectivus	
			species figura	casus tempus genus modus numerus persona coniugatio compositio significatio	



modus significandi  
essentialis  
nominis.

modus significandi essentialis  
generalis nominis= modus  
significandi substantiae  
permanentis habitus seu entis.

modus significandi essentialis  
specialis nominis= modus  
qualitatis seu distinctae  
apprehensionis a quolibet alio,  
quia qualitatis seu formae est  
distinguere, in quo modo  
significandi nomen differt a  
pronomine.



species= designans proprietatem determinandi  
ab aliquo vel a nullo.

qualitas= designans circa rem modum essendi  
vel quod ei repugnat reperiri in pluribus  
vel prout rei non repugnat reperiri in  
pluribus.

adiectivum= designans circa rem modum  
essendi adiacentis.

substantivum= designans circa rem modum per  
se entis et abstracti sive sit proprie ens  
per se, sicut substantiae, sive sint entia  
per se distincta ab illo in quo sunt, et ut  
sic significata, ut in accidentibus  
abstractis.

modus significandi  
accidentalis  
nominis

gradus= designans circa rem modum essendi  
prout est in excessu vel cum excessu.

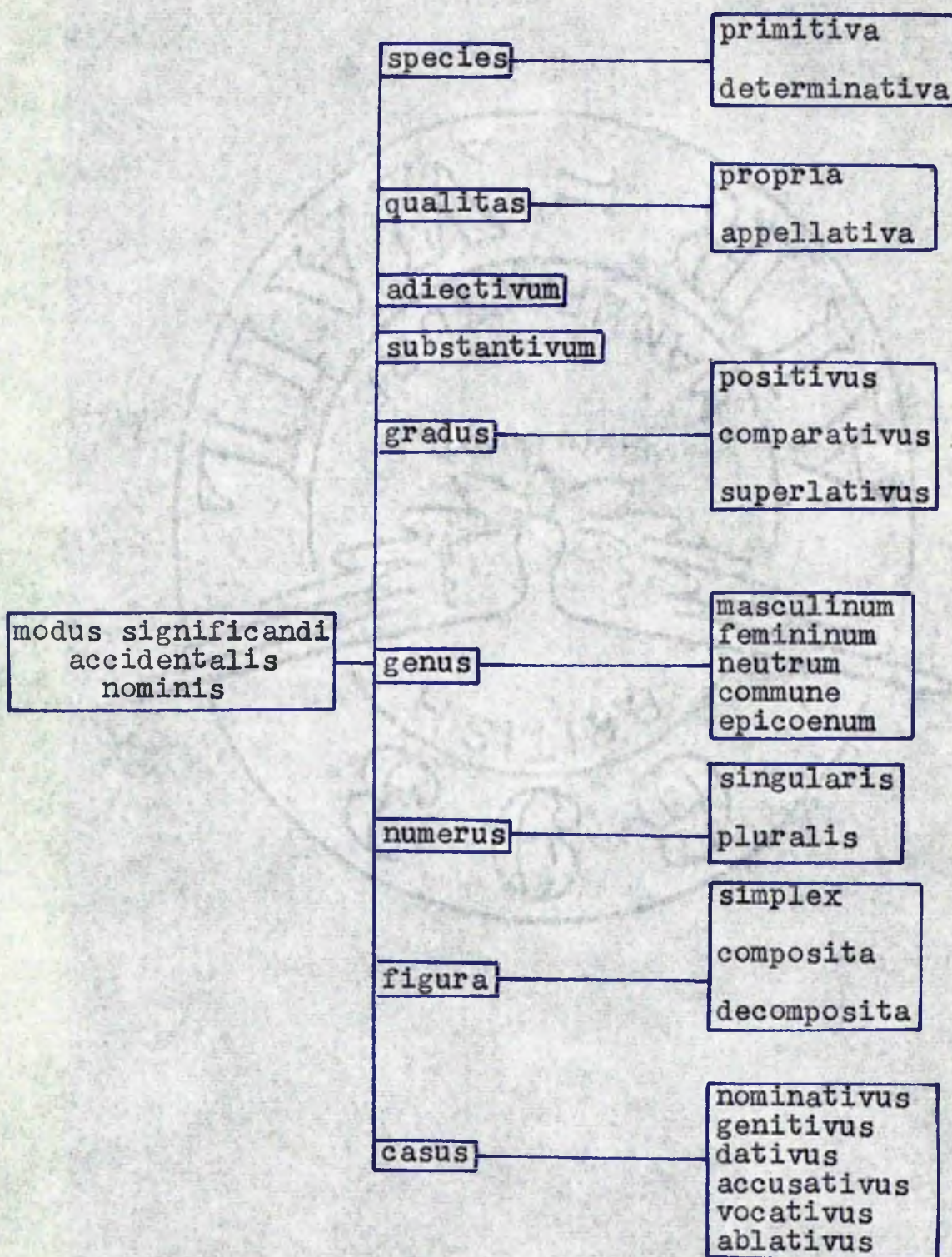
genus= designans circa rem modum essendi  
indifferentem se habentem quodammodo ad  
modos essendi speciales generum.

numerus= designans circa rem modum essendi  
unius aut multi.

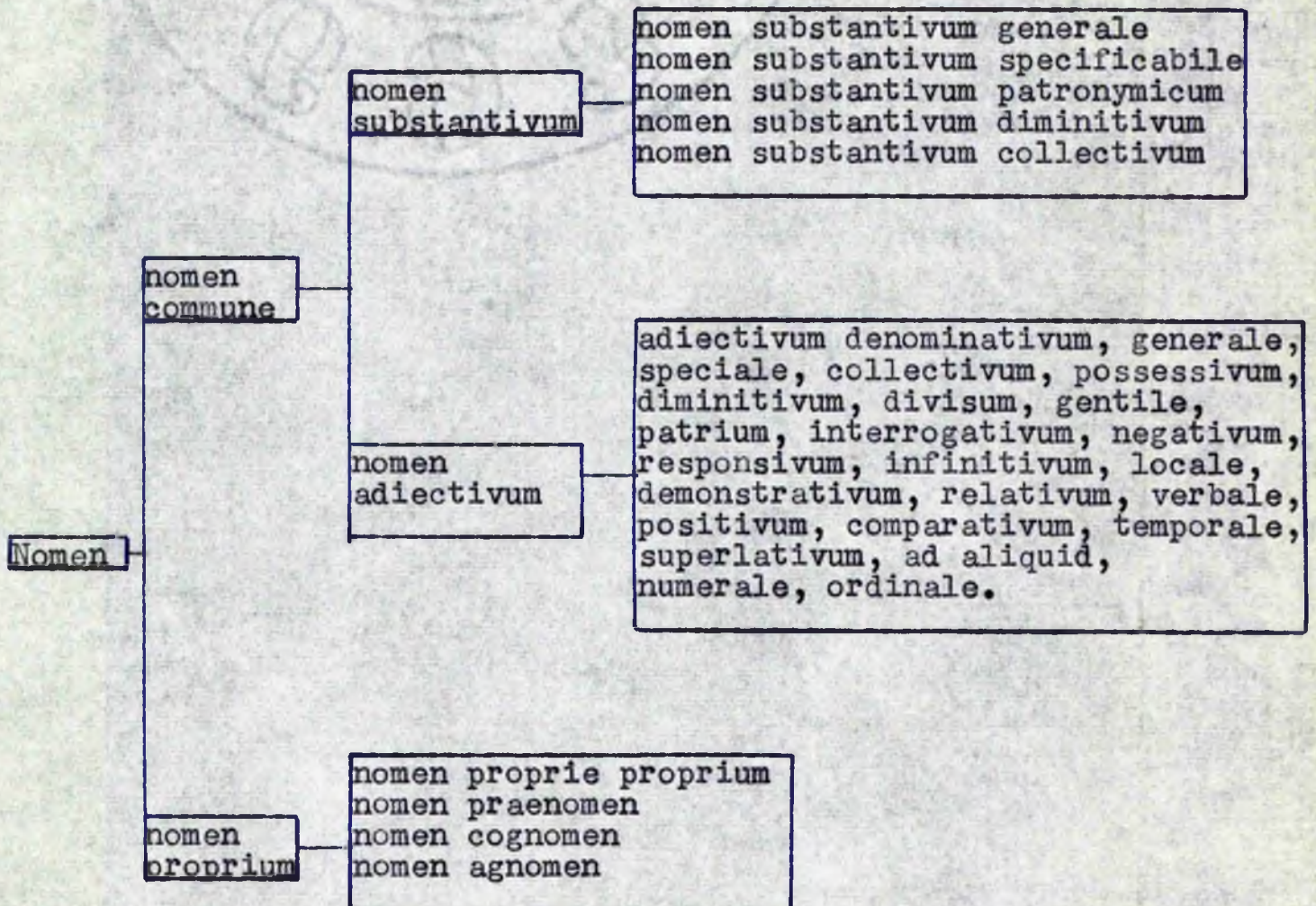
figura= designans circa rem modum essendi  
indivisionis vel compositionis.

casus= designans circa rem modum essendi  
cadentis, inquam rei, intellectus, et vocis,  
seu eiusdem nominis.

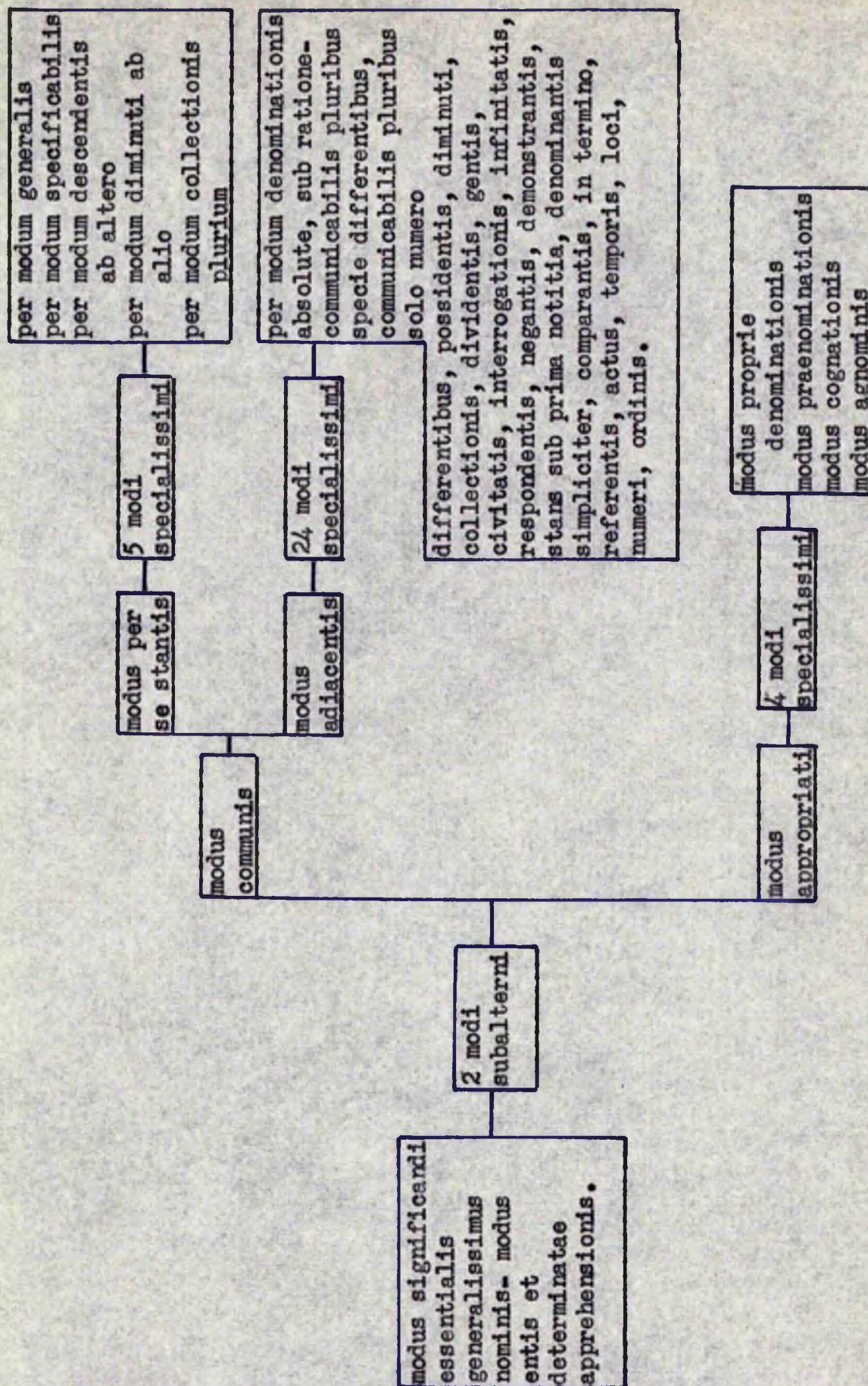














modus significandi  
accidentalis  
nominis

species= mediante quo modum significandi  
primarium vel secundarium significat.

genus= sumptus a proprietate activa, vel  
passiva, quae in rebus separatis magis  
prompte et determinate invenitur.

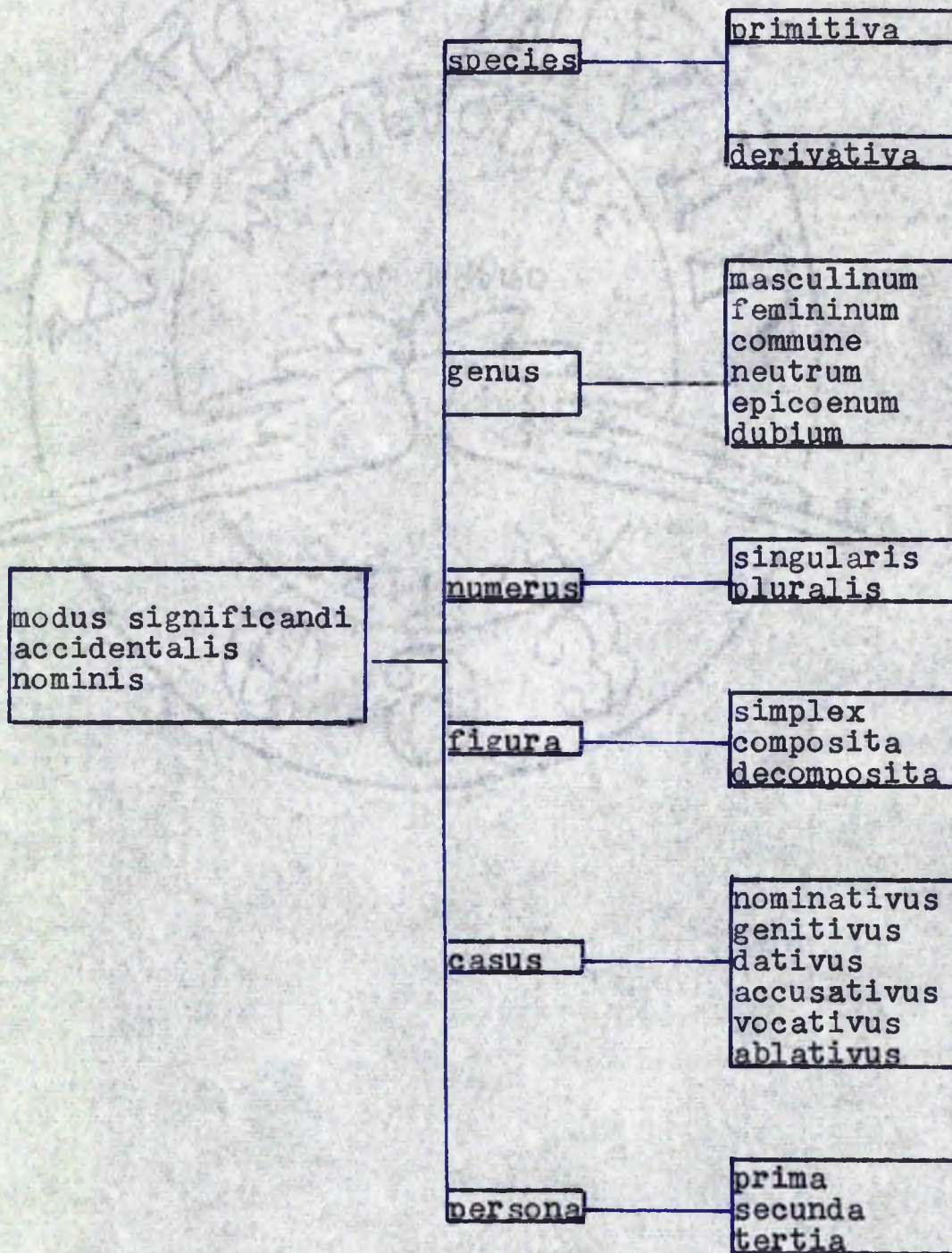
numerus= mediante quo nomen proprietatem  
indivisibilitatis, quae est proprietas  
unius, vel proprietatem divisibilitatis,  
quae est proprietas multitudinis,  
significat.

figura= mediante quo nomen proprietatem  
simplicis, compositi, vel decompositi  
significat.

casus= mediante quo nomen proprietatem  
principii vel termini consignificat.

persona= mediante quo nomen proprietatem  
loquendi consignificat.







modus significandi  
essentialis verbi

modus significandi essentialis  
generalis= modus significandi  
per modum fluxus, fieri seu  
motus, seu esse.

modus significandi essentialis  
specificus= modus significandi  
essentialis de aliquo seu  
significare per modum distantis  
vel facientis alterum extremum  
orationis, in quo differt a  
participio quod significat rem  
suam per modum distantis et  
facientis unum extremum  
orationis cum supposito.



modus significandi  
accidentalis verbi

genus= dividitur in activum, passivum,  
neutrum, deponens et commune.

tempus= designans circa rem modum essendi  
praesentialitatis vel praeteritionis vel  
futuritionis, et dicitur in praesens,  
praeteritum et futurum.

modus= designans circa rem modum essendi  
variae inclinationis animi, varios eius  
affectus demonstrans et dicitur in  
indicativum, imperativum, optativum,  
coniunctivum, infinitivum.

species= sicut in nomine, scilicet  
primitiva et derivativa.

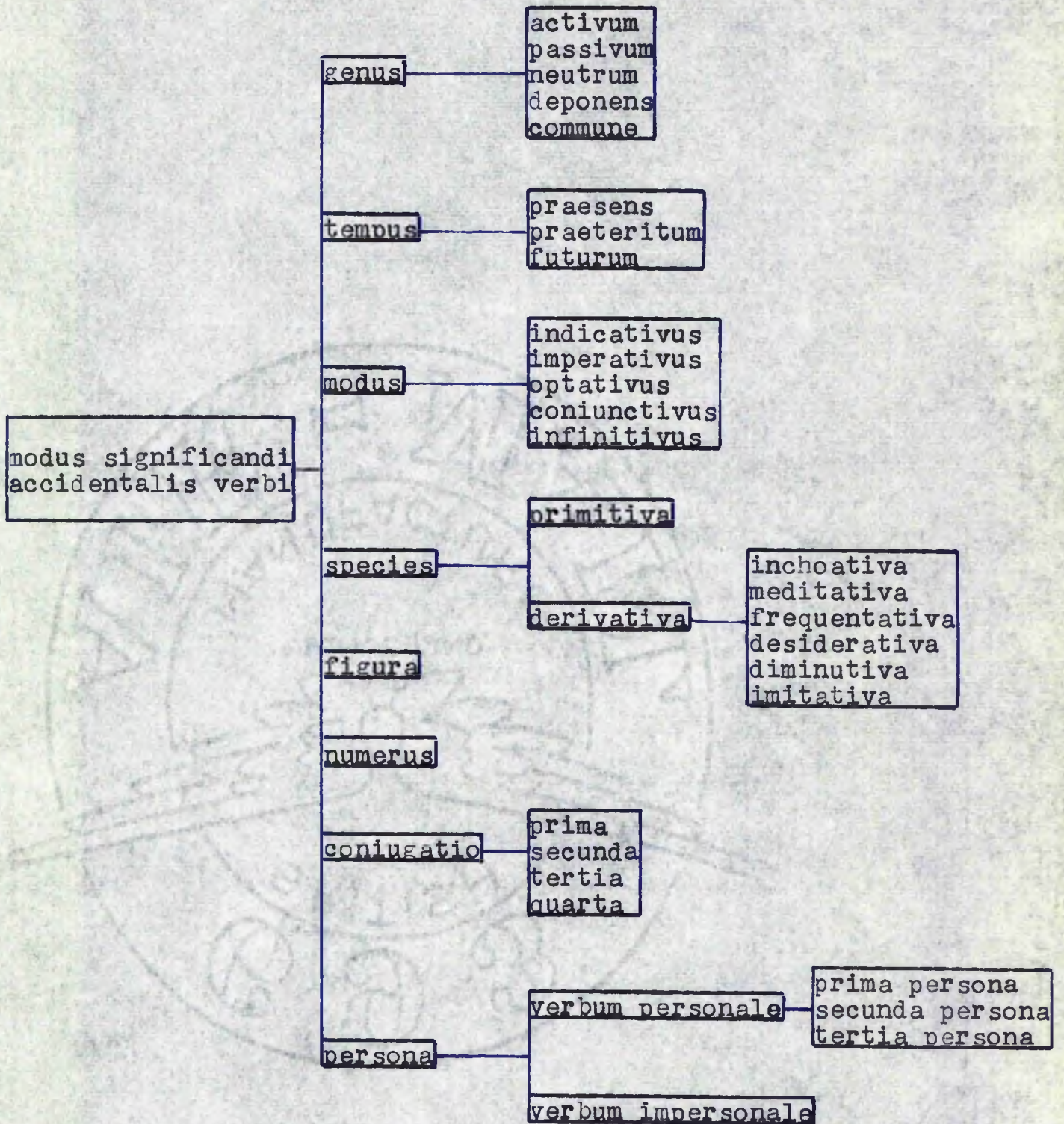
figura= sicut in nomine.

numerus= sicut in nomine.

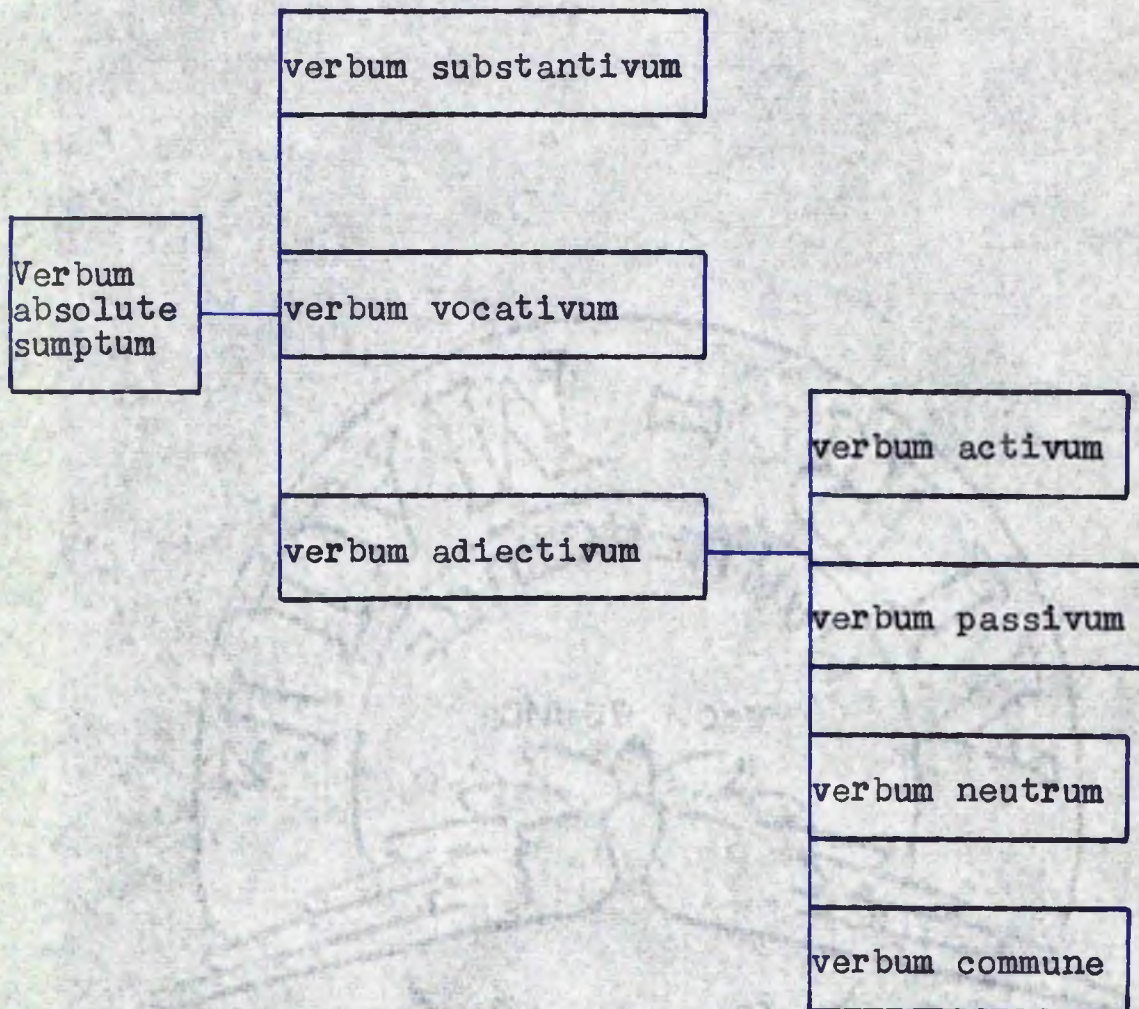
coningatio= quasi una eademque ratione  
declinationis plurima verba coniunguntur.

persona= designans circa rem modum  
essendi prout convenit alicui sub aliquo  
modo loquendi et in hoc convenit cum  
prima significatione; dicitur in primam,  
secundam et tertiam et in hoc convenit  
cum secunda significatione.

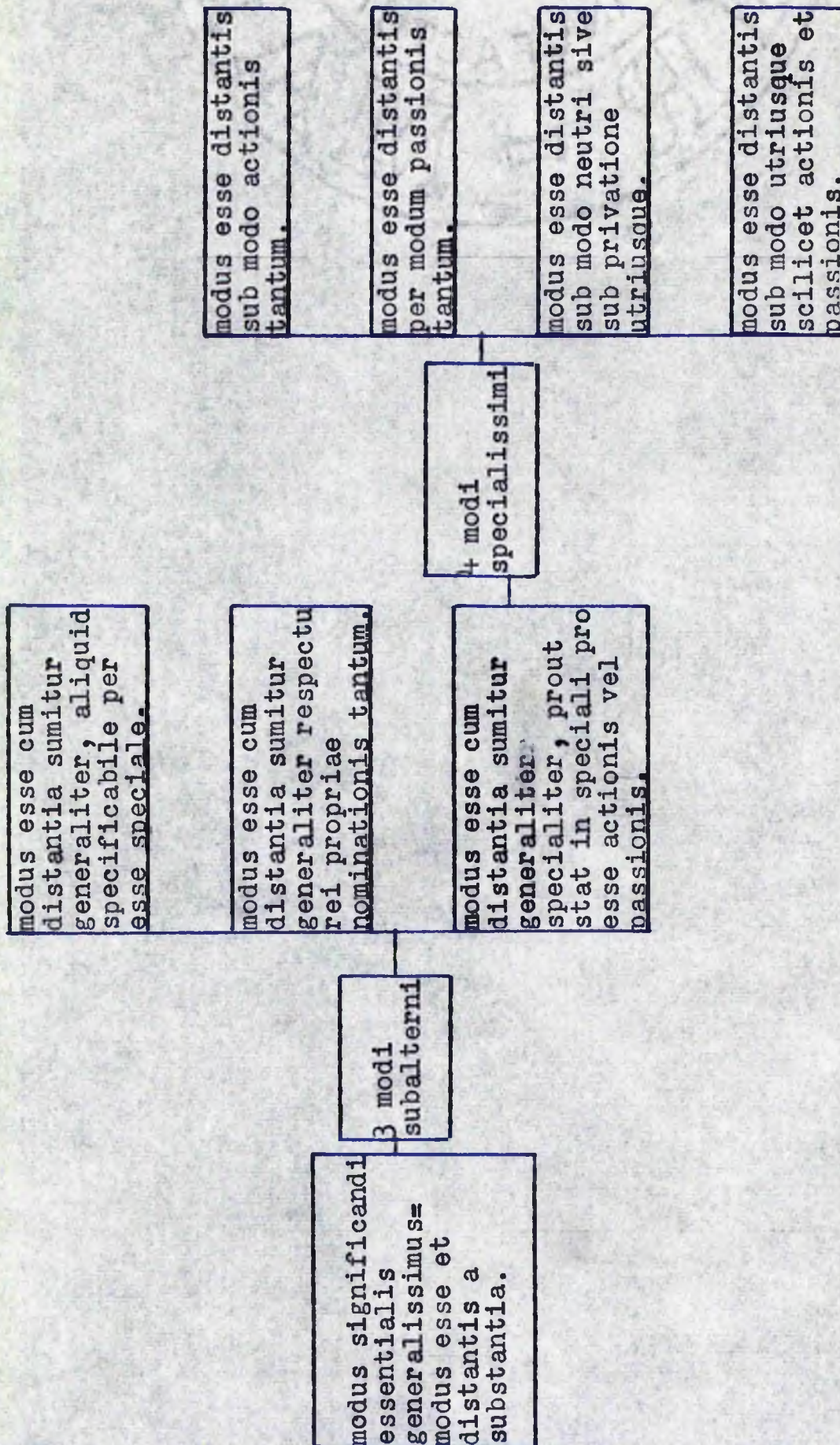














modus significandi  
accidentalis verbi

compositio= mediante quo verbum  
consignificat proprietatem inhaerentis  
secundum esse, et quo mediante verbum  
distans a supposito, primo et  
principaliter ad suppositum inclinatur.

qualitas= modus= mediante quo proprietatem  
verbi per modum indicii, imperii, voti,  
dubii, vel infiniti circa verbi  
dependentiam ad suppositum consignificat:  
et forma= mediante quo verbum modum  
existendi primum vel secundarium  
significat.

coniugatio= modus significandi rem verbi  
prout inflectitur per diversas  
proprietates temporum, numerorum,  
modorum et personarum.

significatio= mediante quo verbum significat  
proprietatem dependentiae ad quemlibet  
obliquum post se.

genus= mediante quo proprietatem  
dependentiae rei verbi post se ad obliquum,  
sub ratione termini, significat.

persona= quo mediante verbum proprietatem  
loquendi consignificat non inhaerentem de  
se, sed ut res verbi applicabilis est rei  
suppositi subsistentis per se secundum  
proprietates loquendi.

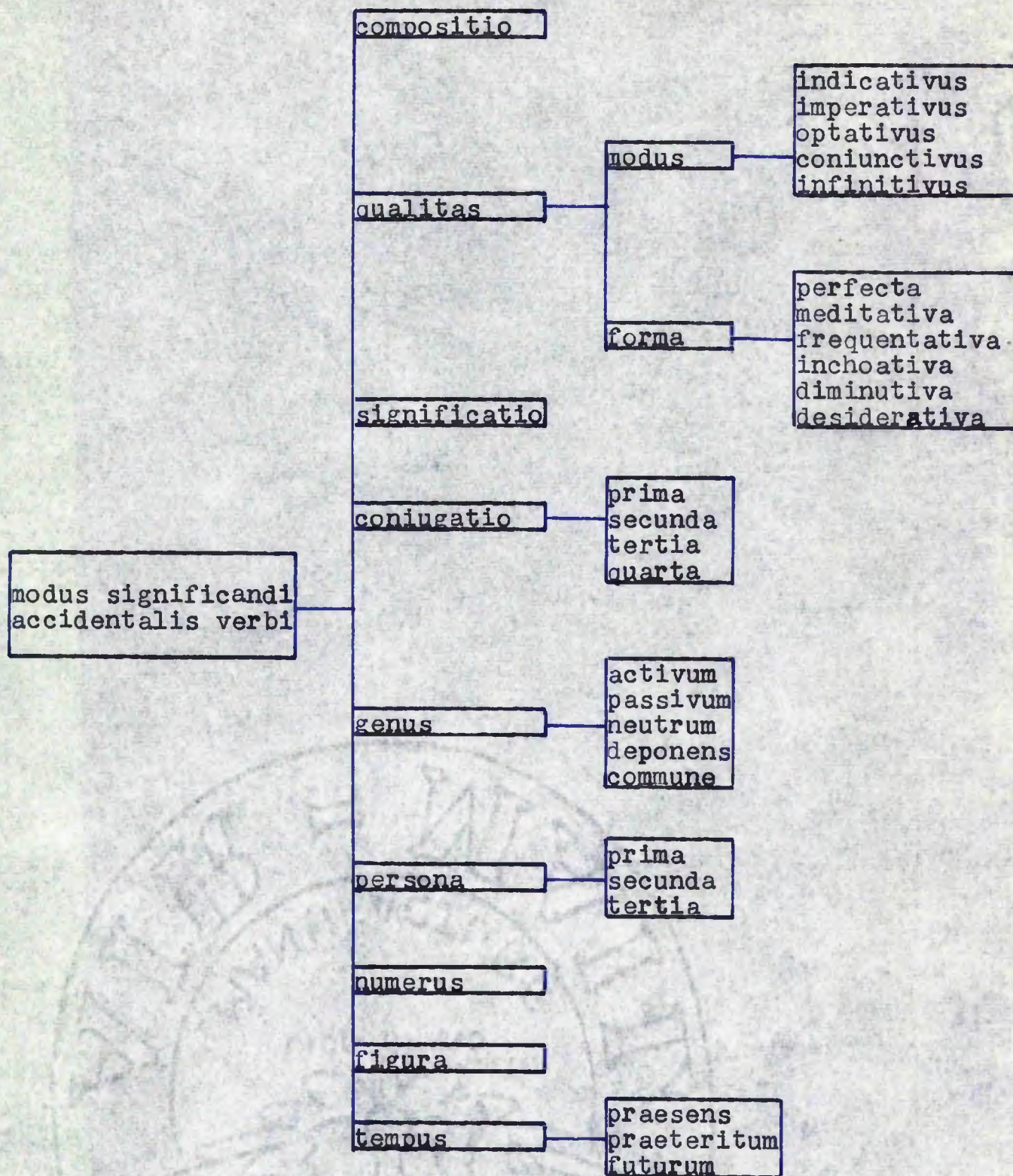
numerus= sicut in nomine.

figura= sicut in nomine.

tempus= quo mediante verbum, citra rem, modum  
temporis consignificat.



Thomas of Erfurt:  
Modus significandi  
accidentalis verbi.





modus significandi  
essentialis  
participii.

modus significandi essentialis  
generalis= modus significandi  
fieri, motus, fluxus seu esse.

modus significandi essentialis  
specificus= modus significandi  
indistantis seu uniti  
substantiae.





Modus significandi  
accidentalis  
Participii =

genus = sicut in nomine.

casus = sicut in nomine.

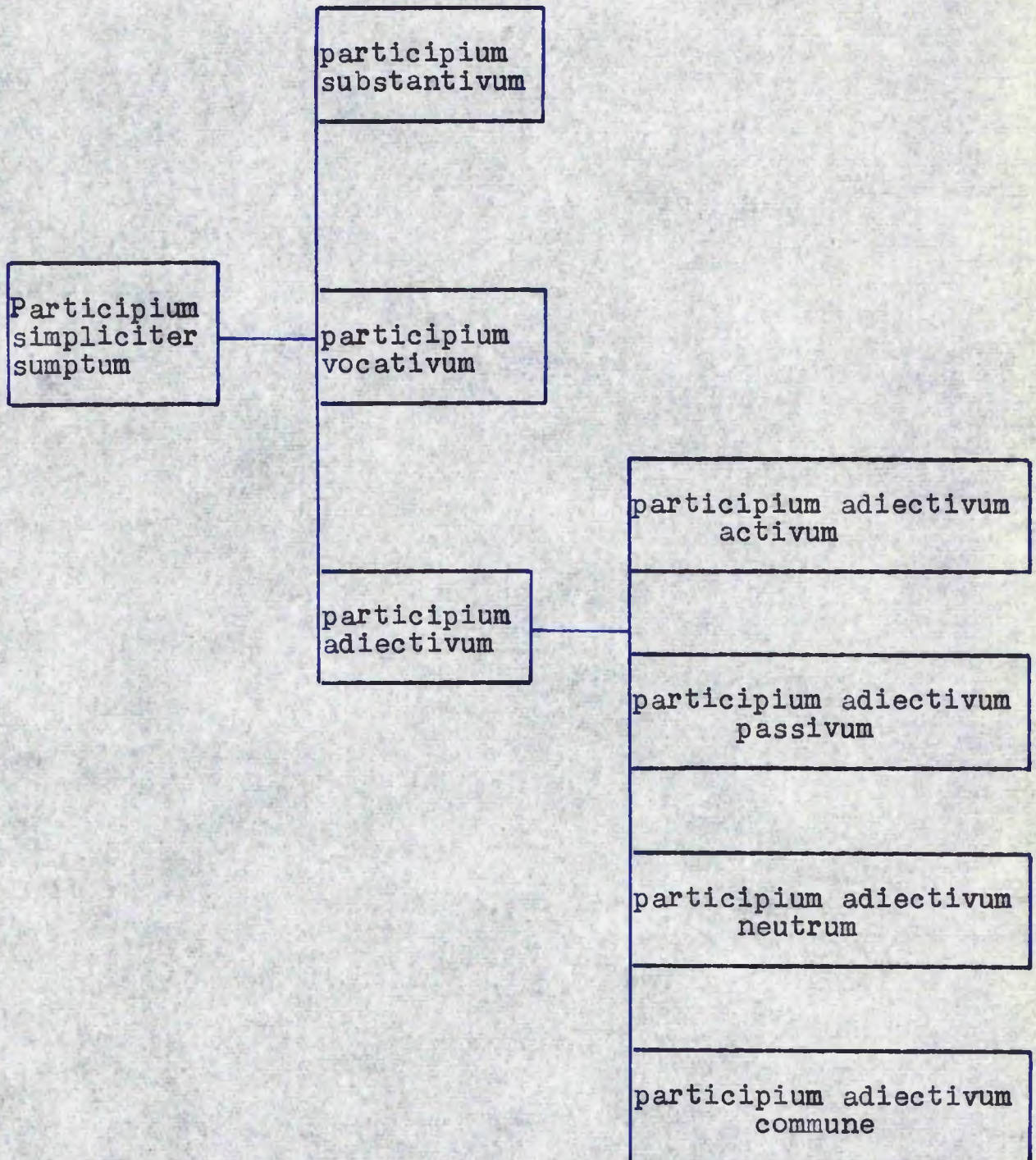
significatio = sicut in verbo.

tempus = sicut in verbo.

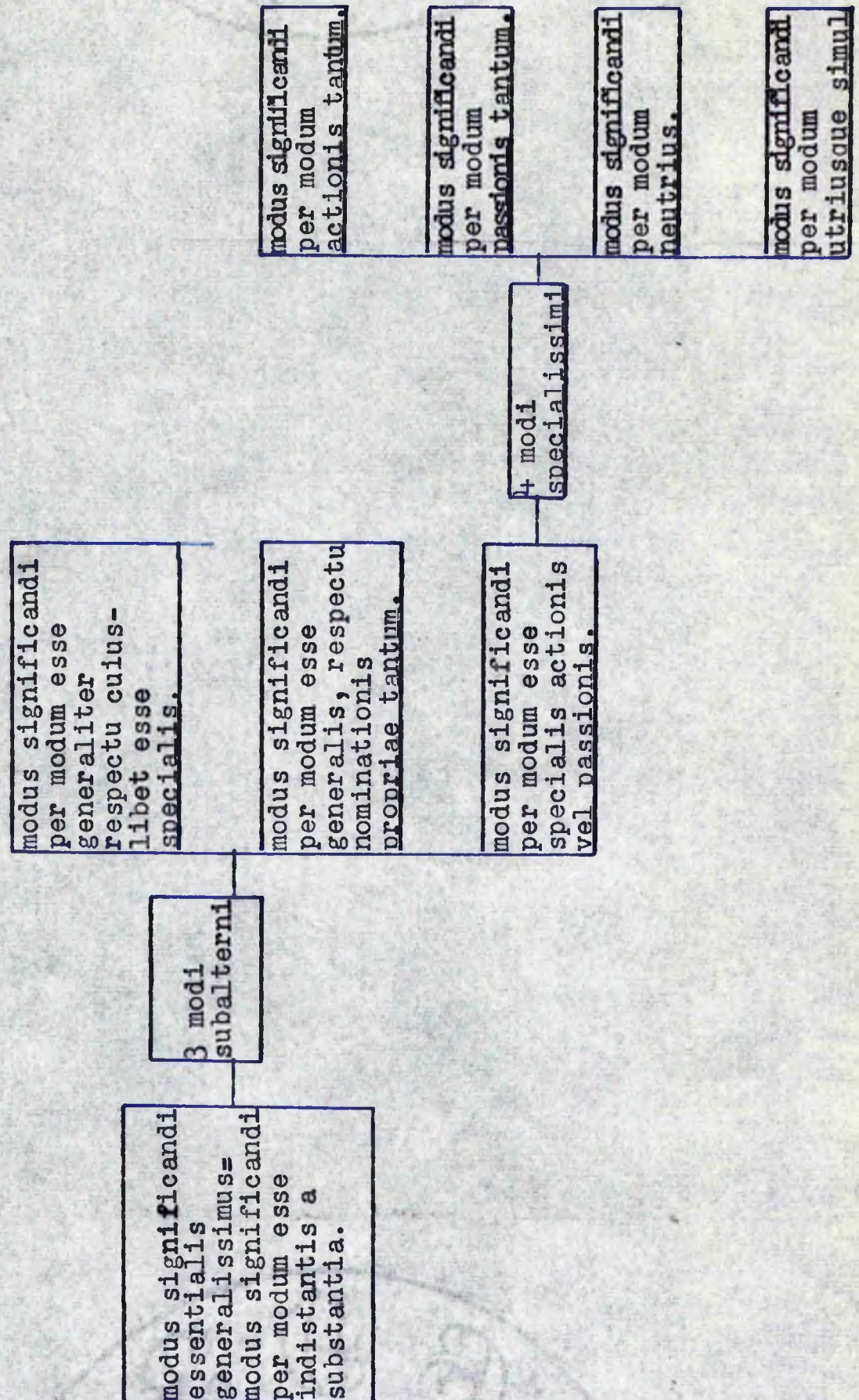
numerus = sicut in nomine.

figura = sicut in nomine.

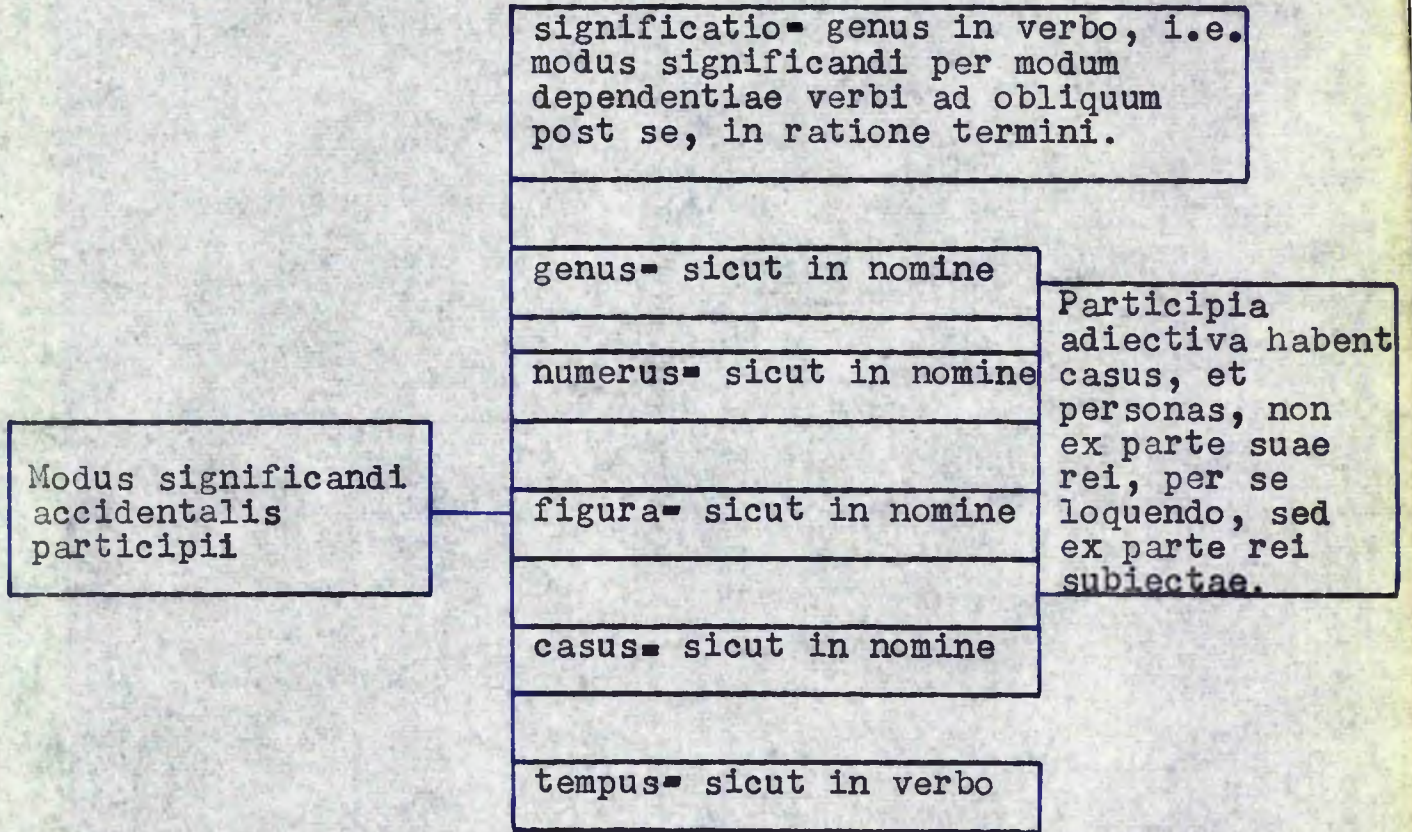












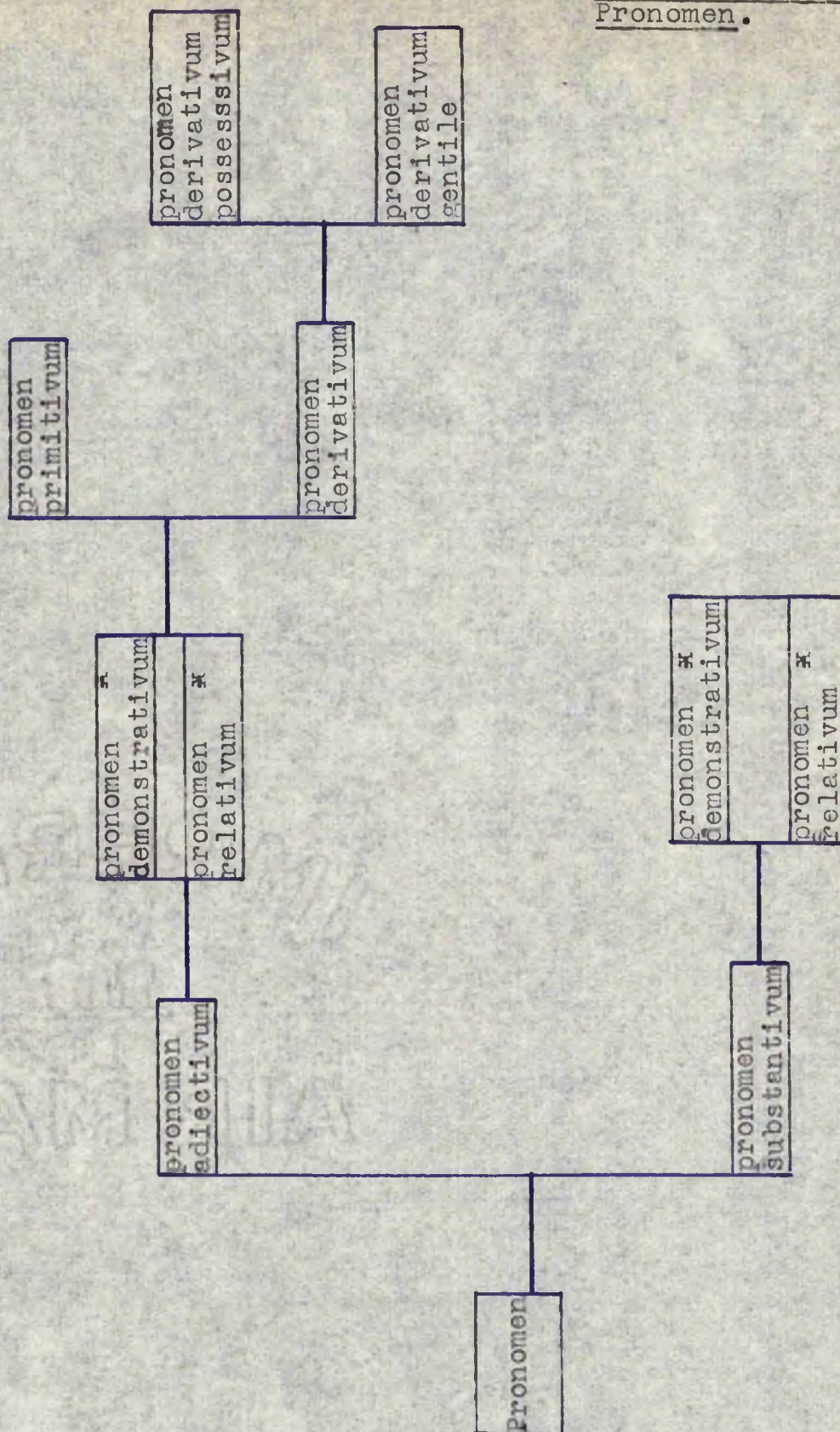


modus significandi  
essentialis  
pronominis

modus significandi essentialis  
generalis= modus significandi  
substantiae, habitus  
permanentis, seu entis.

[modus significandi essentialis  
specialis=]modus significandi  
indeterminati, confusi,  
substantiae mere seu sine  
qualitate.





- \* Demonstratio and relatio do not create different types of pronoun, but represent different aspects of the same pronoun, but are present or absent according to the degree of substance present in a particular pronoun.



modus significandi  
 per modum adia-  
 centis alteri, sub  
 ratione possid-  
 entis insum.

modus significandi  
 per modum adia-  
 centis alteri sub  
 ratione gentis,  
 vel patriae.

2 modi  
 specialissimi

modus adiacentis ab  
 eadem proprietate  
 sumitur, a quo sumebatur  
 in nomine, scilicet  
 modus adiacentis a  
 proprietate inhaerentis  
 alteri secundum esse.

modus per se stantis ab  
 eadem proprietate  
 sumitur, a quo sumebatur  
 in nomine, scilicet  
 modus per se stantis a  
 proprietate essentiae  
 distinctae.

demonstratio sumitur a proprietate rei,  
 quae est proprietates certitudinis, et  
 praesentiae.

relatio sumitur a proprietate rei, quae est  
 proprietates absentiae, et incertitudinis.

primitivus sumitur ab eadem proprietate in  
 pronomine, a quo sumitur species primitiva  
 in nomine.

derivativus sumitur ab eadem proprietate in  
 pronomine, a quo sumitur species derivativa  
 in nomine.

6 modi  
 subalterni

modus significandi  
 essentialis  
 generalissimus-  
 per modum entis et  
 indeterminatae  
 apprehensionis.



modus significandi  
accidentalis  
pronominis

genus = sicut in nomine

numerus = sicut in nomine

figura = sicut in nomine

persona = sicut in nomine

casus = sicut in nomine

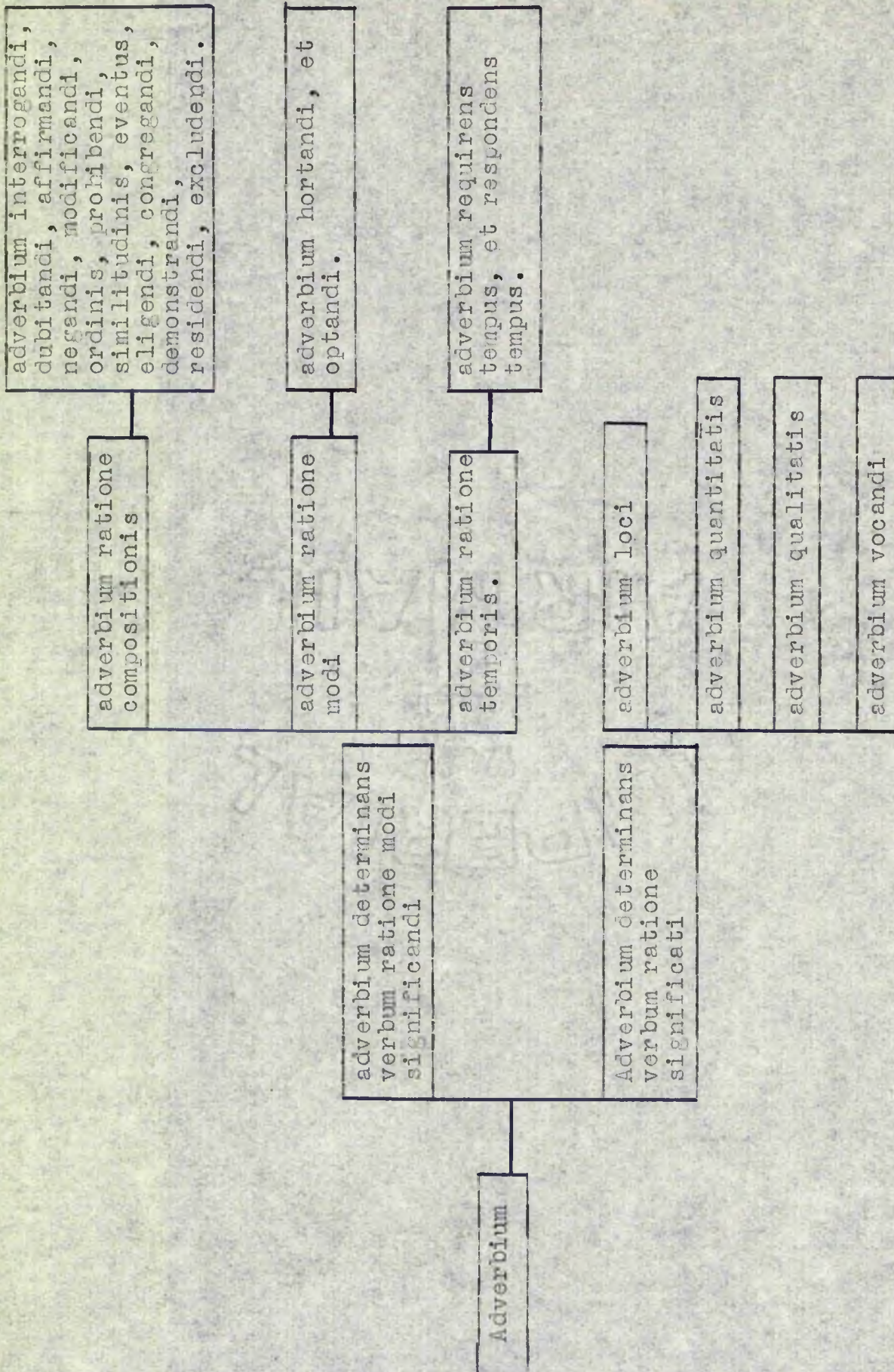


modus significandi  
essentialis adverbii

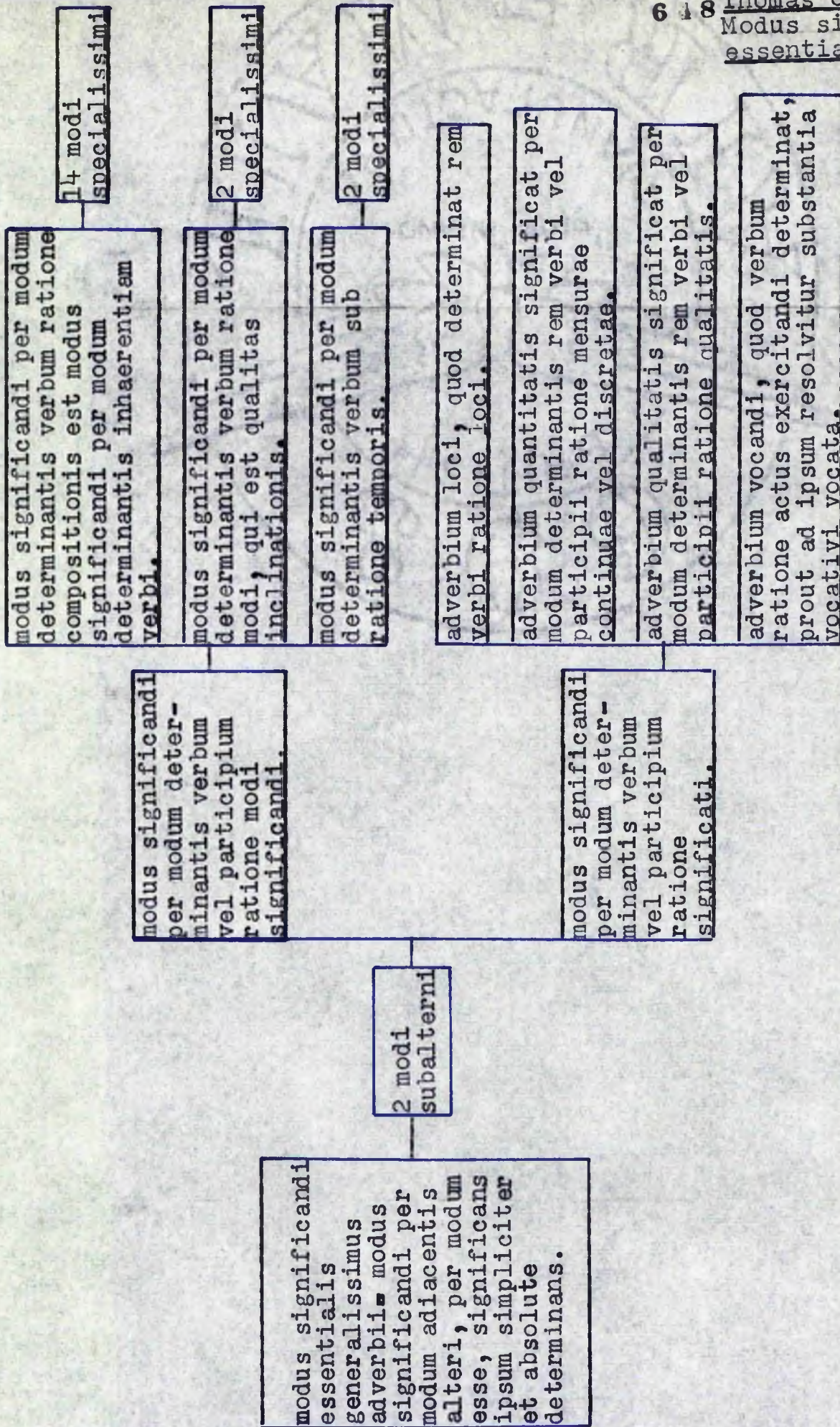
modus significandi essentialis  
generalis = significare per  
modum disponentis.

modus significandi essentialis  
specificus = significare per  
modum determinantis actum vel  
aliquid quod rem suam significat  
per modum esse, fieri, motus  
vel actus.









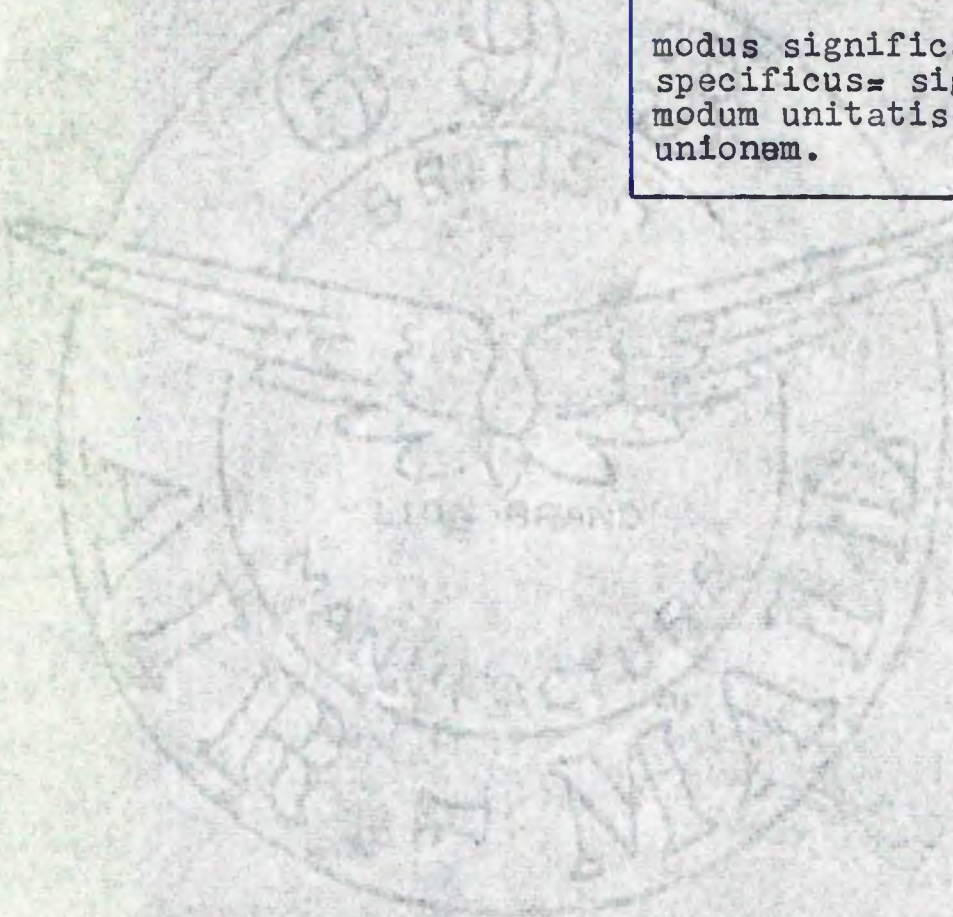


Siger de Courtrai:  
Modus significandi  
essentialis Coniunctionis

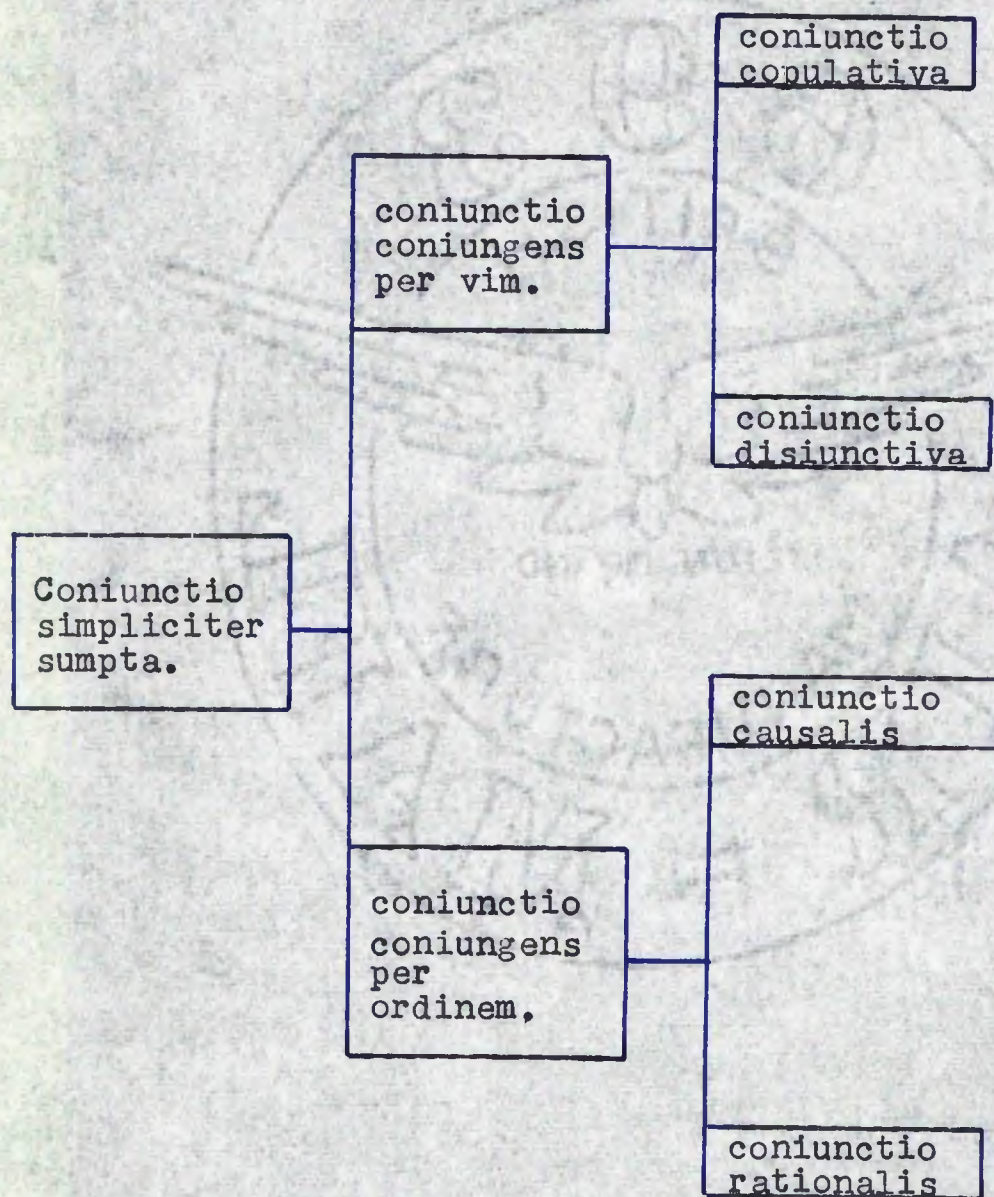
modus significandi  
 essentialis  
 coniunctionis

modus significandi essentialis  
 generalis= significare per  
 modum disponentis.

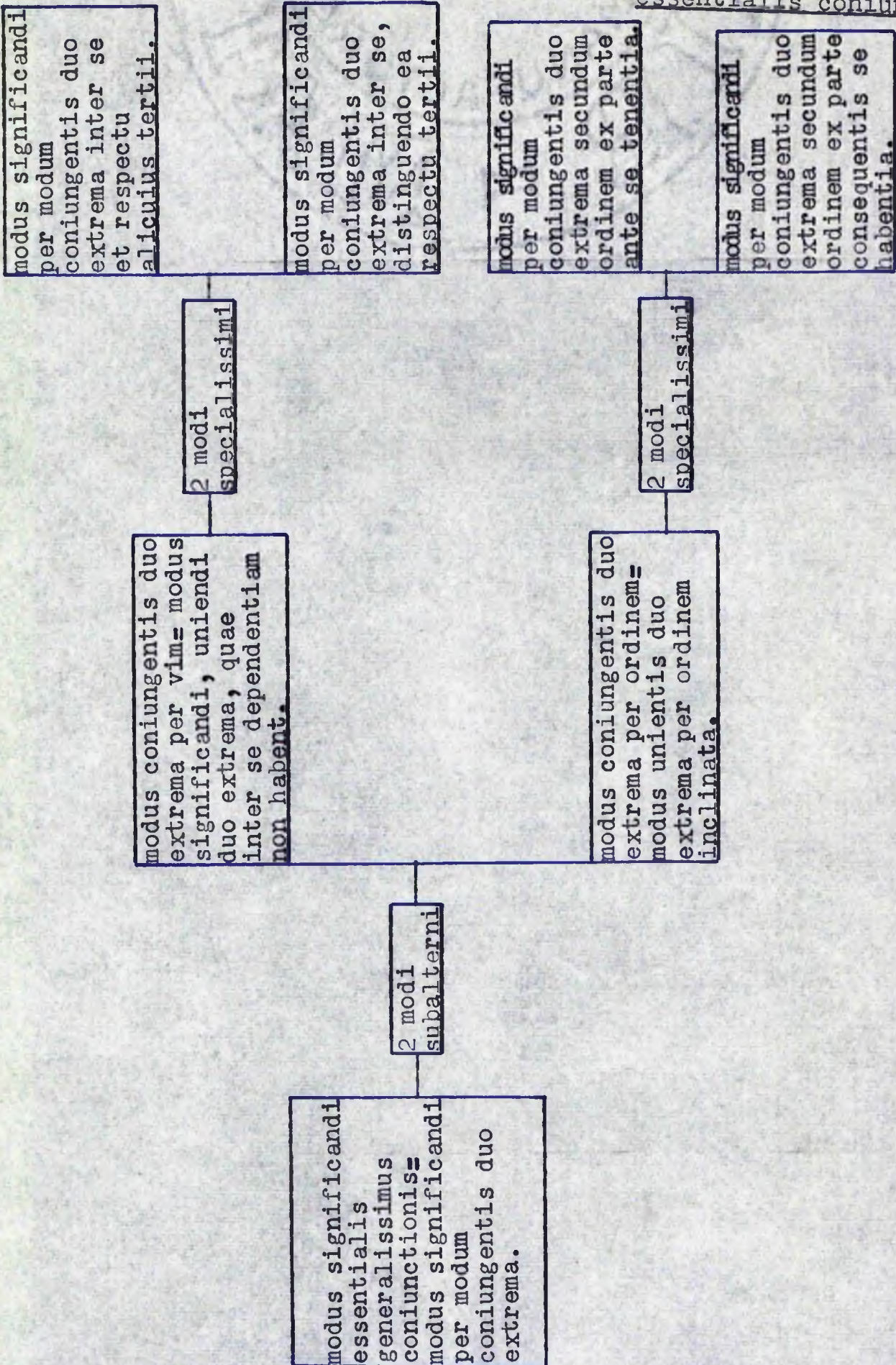
modus significandi essentialis  
 specificus= significare per  
 modum unitatis extendendo  
 unionem.













Modus significandi  
accidentalis Coniunctionis.

modus significandi  
accidentalis  
coniunctionis

species= sicut in nomine

figura= sicut in nomine

ordo= modus significandi activus,  
quo mediante coniunctio ordinem  
extremorum consignificat.

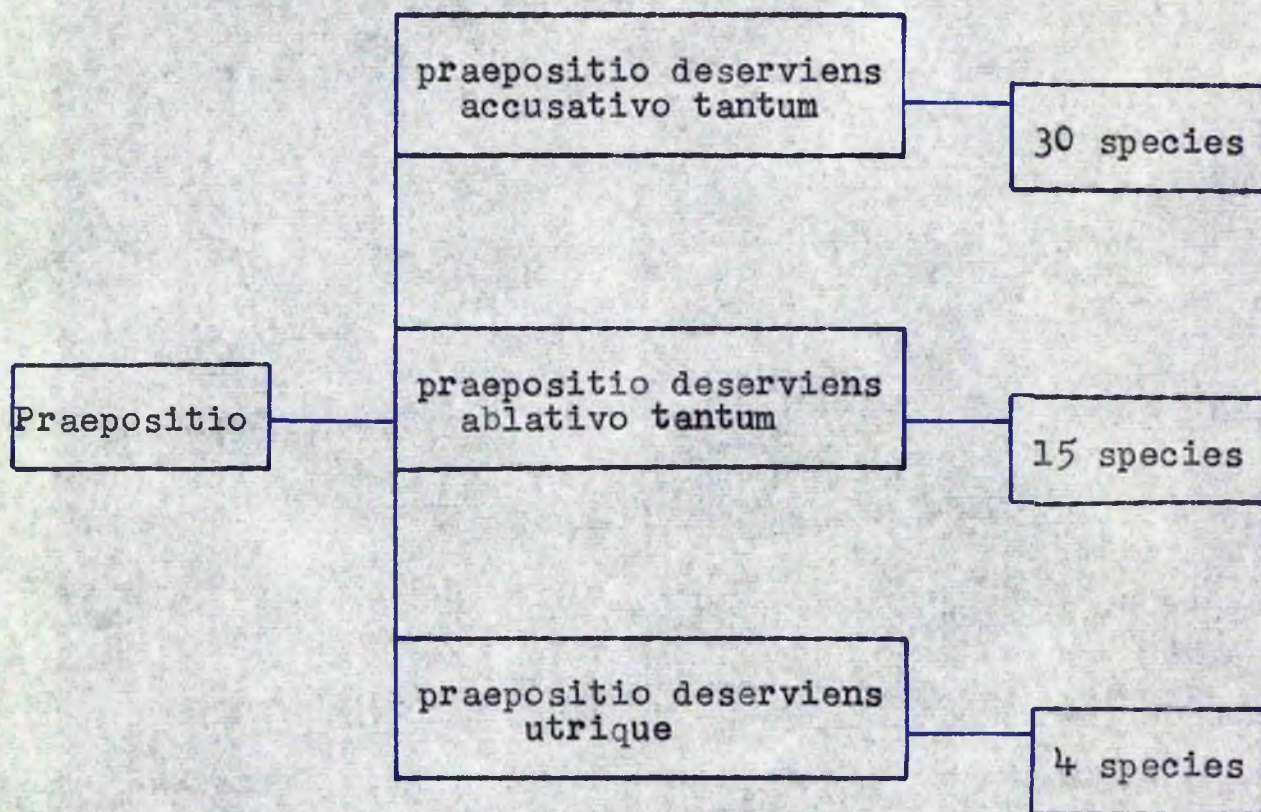


modus significandi essentialis  
generalis= significare per modum  
disponentis.

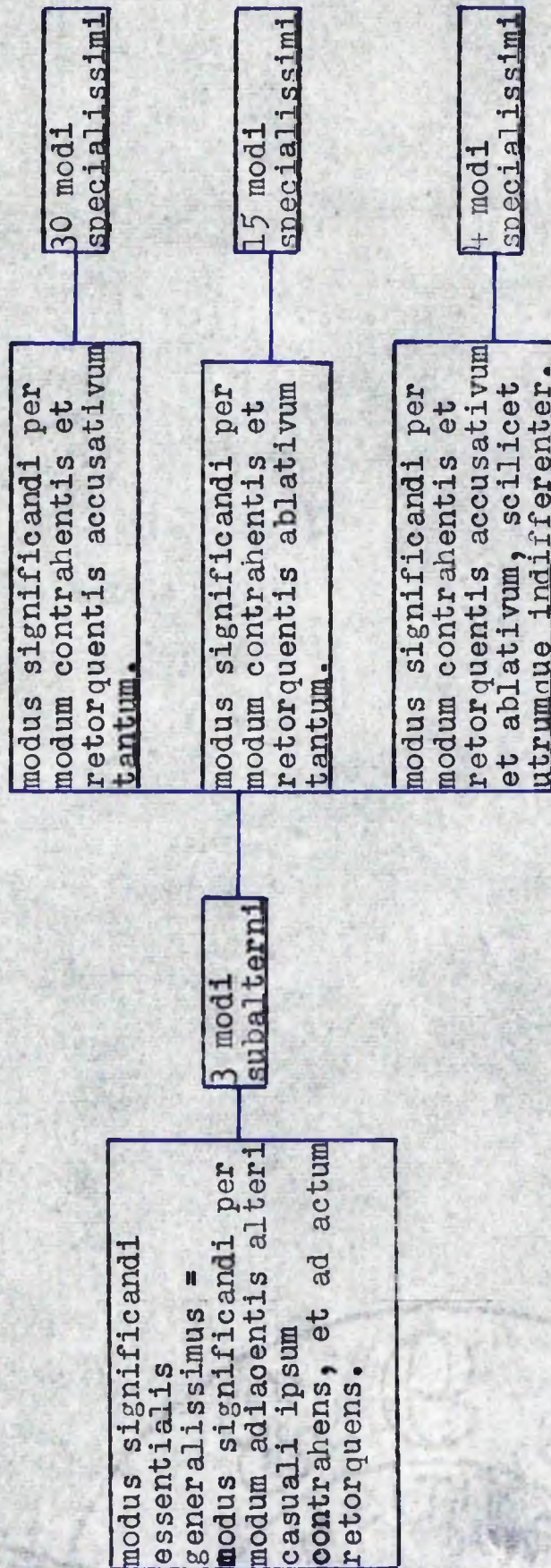
modus significandi  
essentialis  
praepositionis

modus significandi essentialis  
specificus= modus significandi  
per modum retorquentis casuale  
ad actum.









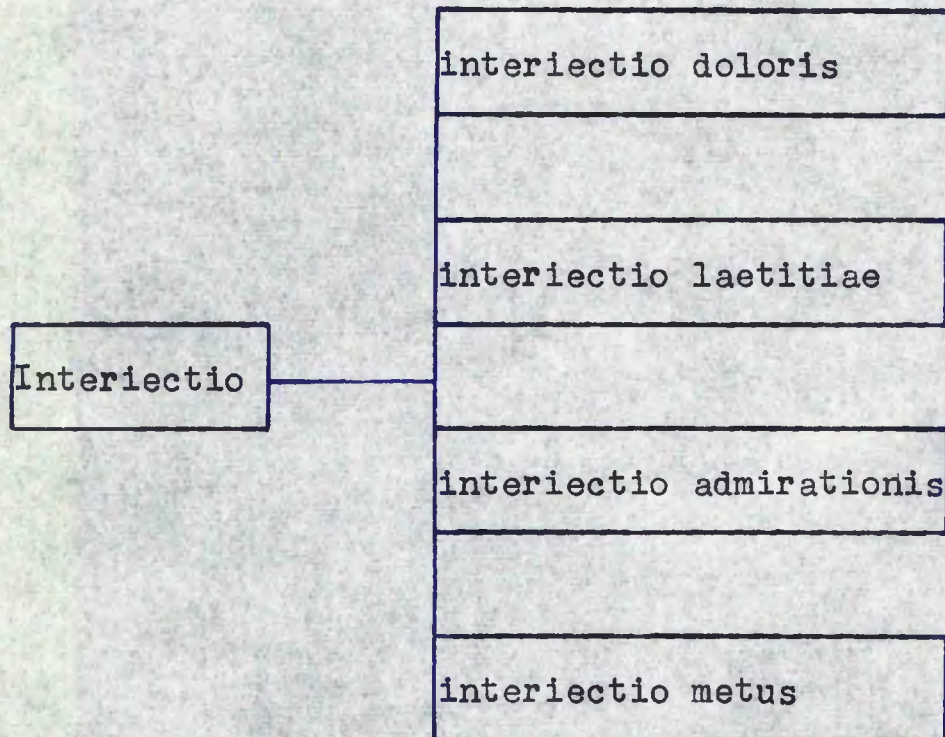


modus significandi  
essentialis  
interiectionis

modus significandi essentialis  
generalis = significare per modum  
disponentis.

modus significandi essentialis  
specialis = significare per modum  
afficientis animam.







modus determinantis alterum,  
motum doloris, vel tristitiae  
in anima repraesentans.

modus determinantis alterum,  
motum gaudii vel laetitiae  
in anima repraesentans.

modus determinantis alterum,  
motum admirationis in anima  
repraesentans.

modus determinantes alterum,  
motum terroris, vel metum  
repraesentans.

+ modi  
specialissimi

modus significandi  
essentialis generalissimus=  
modus significandi per modum  
determinantis alterum, quod  
est verbum, vel participium,  
affectiones animi repraesentans.



principium materiale construendi  
sunt constructibilia, i.e.  
materia constructionis.

principium formale constructionis  
est unio constructibilium, i.e.  
forma constructionis.

principium efficiens constructionis  
est duplex, i.e. intrinsecum, et  
extrinsecum.

principium finale constructionis  
est expressio mentis conceptus  
compositi; expressio mentis  
conceptus compositi est finis  
constructionis.

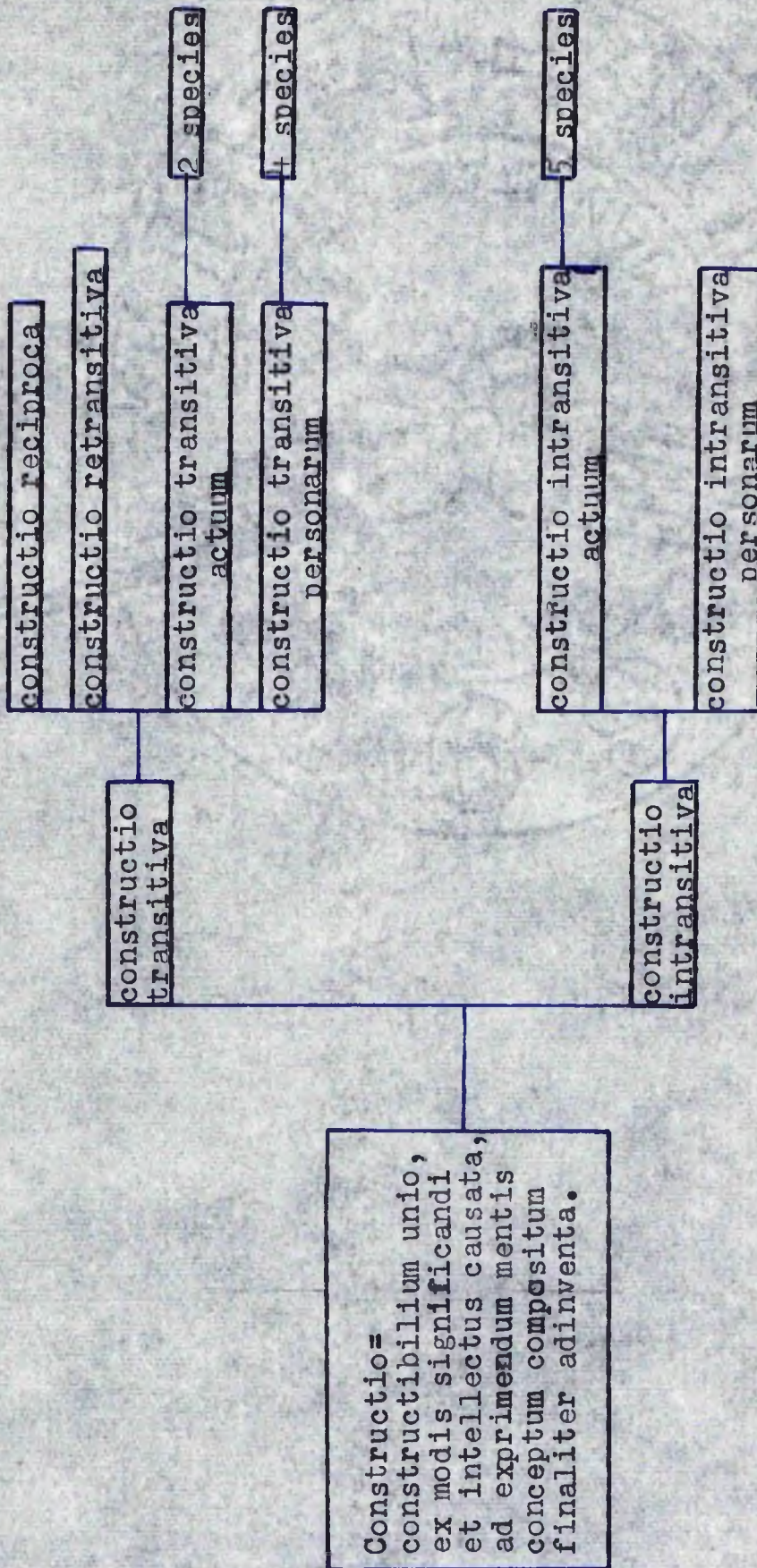
4 principia  
construendi

Diasynthetica

intrinsecum sunt modi  
significandi respectivi,  
ratione quorum vel unum  
constructibile est ad  
alterum dependens, vel  
alterius dependentiam  
determinans.

extrinsecum est  
intellectus, qui  
constructibilia per  
modos significandi  
disposita et  
praeeparata actu unit  
in constructione  
et sermone.







diversificatur secundum  
diversitatem casus  
supponentis.

constructio intransitiva actuum =  
in qua constructibile dependens  
per modum actus significat.

diversificatur  
secundum  
diversitatem  
determinationem.

constructio intransitiva personarum =  
in qua constructibile dependens  
significat per modum substantiae,  
vel quomodolibet aliter.

Constructio intransitiva =  
constructio, in qua  
secundum constructibile,  
per suos modos  
significandi, dependet  
ad primum.



4 species  
specialissimae

constructio transitiva  
actus signati

constructio transitiva  
actus exercitati

constructio transitiva actuum =  
in qua constructibile dependens  
per modum actus significat.

Constructio transitiva =  
in qua primum  
constructibile, per suos  
modos significandi,  
dependet ad secundum,  
secundo per eius  
dependentiam a primo  
recedente, si dependens  
fuerit.

constructio transitiva personarum =  
in qua constructibile dependens per  
modum substantiae significat.

dividitur in 4 species,  
secundum quadruplicem  
diversitatem  
constructibilis  
terminantis.



<u>Partes orationis</u>						
<u>Partes declinabiles</u>			<u>Partes indeclinabiles</u>			
Modus entis		Modus esse		Modus disponentis		
modus deter- minatae appre- hensionis	modus indeter- minatae appre- hensionis	modus distantis	modus indistantis	modus deter- minantis actum	modus con- iungentis duo extrema	modus retor- quentis casuale ad actum
Nomen	Pronomen	Verbum	Participium	Adverbium	Coniunctio	Praepositio
						Interiectio
						modus afficientis animam



# Partes declinabiles

Modus entis			Modus esse	
modus determinativae apprehensionis			modus distantis	modus indistantis
nomen commune	nomen proprium	nomen adiectivum	pronomen: substantivum, demonstrativum primum.	pronomen: adiectivum, relativum, derivativum:
nomen substantivum	nomen adiectivum			
5 species	24 species	4 species	pronomen: substantivum, demonstrativum primum.	pronomen: adiectivum, relativum, derivativum:
			verbum: substantivum, vocativum, adiectivum:	verbum: substantivum, vocativum, adiectivum:
			verbum adiectivum: activum passivum neutrum commune	verbum adiectivum: activum passivum neutrum commune
			participium adiectivum: activum passivum neutrum commune	participium adiectivum: activum passivum neutrum commune

Appendix D:

664

Partes declinabiles.



Appendix

Partes in

Partes indeclinabiles						
Modus disponentis						
Adverbium		Coniunctio		Praepositio	Interiectio	
modus determinantis actum		modus coniungentis duo extrema		modus retorquentis casuale	modus afficientis animam	
ratione significati	ratione modi significandi		coniunctio per vim	coniunctio per ordinem	praepositio deserviens: (1) accusativo =30 species (2) ablativo =15 species (3) utrique =4 species	interiectio (1) doloris (2) gaudii (3) admirationis (4) terroris
	adverbium loci, quantitatis, qualitatis, vocandi.	ratione compositionis	coniunctiva disiunctiva	causalis rationalis		
ratione rationis		ratione modi	ratione temporis			
14 species		2 species	2 species			



Modus entis.

Modus entis					Modus indeterminatae apprehensionis
Modus determinatae apprehensionis					Pronomen
Nomen					
modus significandi essentialis		modus significandi accidentalis			
modus communis		modus appropriati	modus absolutus	modus respectivus	
modus per se stantis	modus adiacentis	Nomen: proprium praenomen cognomen agnomen	species figura	casus genus gradus numerus persona qualitas	
Nomen substantivum: generale, speciale, patronymicum, collectivum, diminutivum.	Nomen adiectivum: generale, speciale, denominativum, collectivum, possessivum, diminutivum, divisivum, gentile, patrum, infinitum, interrogativum, responsivum, negativum, ordinale, demonstrativum, relativum, numerale, positivum, locale, comparativum, superlativum, ad aliquid, temporale, verbale.				



Appendix E.Glossary.SigerAdverbium:

Significare per modum  
determinantis actum vel  
aliquid quod rem suam  
significat per modum esse,  
fieri, motus vel actus.

Casus (nomen):

casus est modus significandi  
accidentalis designans circa  
rem modum essendi cadentis,  
inquam rei, intellectus et  
vocis, seu eiusdem nominis.

Casus (praepositio):Compositio:Congruitas:Thomas

Adverbium est pars orationis  
significans per modum adjacentis  
alteri, quod per modum esse  
significat ipsum esse absolute  
determinans.

casus est modus significandi  
accidentalis nominis, mediante quo  
nomen proprietatem principii, vel  
termini consignificat.

casus in praepositione consistit  
in speciali modo contrahendi et  
retorquendi.

compositio est modus significandi  
accidentalis verbi, mediante quo  
verbum consignificat proprietatem  
inhaerentis secundum esse, et quo  
mediante verbum distans a  
supposito, primo et principaliter  
ad suppositum inclinatur.

congruitas...est...partium  
sermonis debita unio ex modorum  
significandi conformitate ad  
aliquam speciem constructionis  
requisitorum derelicta.



SigerConiugatio:

nominatur coniugatio quasi una eademque ratione declinationis plurima verba coniunguntur.

Coniunctio:

significare per modum unitatis extendendo unionem.

Constructio:

constructio est constructibilium unio.

Declinatio:

casus est declinatio nominum vel aliarum casualium dictionum, quae maxime fit in fine.

Dictio:

per rationem signandi vox formaliter dicitur dictio.

Figura:

figura est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi individuationis vel compositionis.

Forma:Thomas

est coniugatio modus significandi rem verbi prout inflectitur per diversas proprietates temporum, numerorum, modorum et personarum.

coniunctio est pars orationis, per modum coniungentis duo extrema significans.

constructio est constructibilium unio, ex modis significandi et intellectus causata, ad exprimendum mentis conceptum compositum finaliter adinventum.

declinatio est modus significandi rem nominis, per quem inflectitur.

dicitur dictio formaliter per rationem signandi voci superadditam, quia dictio est vox significativa.

figura est modus significandi accidentalis nominis, mediante quo, nomen proprietatem simplicis, compositi, vel decompositi significat.

forma est modus significandi accidentalis verbi, mediante quo verbum modum existendi primum vel secundarium significat.



SigerGenus (nomen):

genus est modus significandi  
accidentalis nominis designans  
circa rem modum essendi  
indifferentem, se habentem  
quodammodo ad modos essendi  
speciales generum.

Genus (verbum):

genus seu significatio dividitur  
in activum, passivum, neutrum,  
deponens et commune.

Gradus:

gradus est modus significandi  
accidentalis nominis designans  
circa rem modum essendi prout  
est in excessu vel cum excessu,  
et dividitur in positivum,  
comparativum, et superlativum.

Interiectio:

significare per modum afficientis  
animam.

Modus (verbum):

modus in verbo est modus signifi-  
candi accidentalis verbi designans  
circa rem modum essendi variae  
inclinationis animi, varios eius  
affectus demonstrans.

Nomen:

modus significandi essentialis  
generalis nominis est modus  
significandi substantiae, per-  
manentis habitus seu entis...  
modus significandi specialis est  
modus qualitatis seu distinctae  
apprehensionis a quolibet alio,  
quia qualitatis seu formae est  
distinguere.

Thomas

genus est modus significandi  
nominis, sumptus a proprietate  
activa, vel passiva, quae in  
rebus separatis magis prompte et  
determinate invenitur.

genus est modus significandi  
accidentalis verbi, mediante  
quo proprietatem dependentiae  
rei verbi post se ad obliquum,  
sub ratione termini, significat.

interiectio est pars orationis  
significans per modum determin-  
antis alterum, quod est verbum,  
vel participium, affectus vel  
motus animae repraesentans.

modus verbi...est...modus  
significandi accidentalis verbi,  
mediante quo proprietatem verbi  
per modum indicii, imperii, voti,  
dubii, vel infiniti circa verbi  
dependentiam ad suppositum  
consignificat.

nomen est pars orationis  
significans per modum entis,  
vel determinatae apprehensionis.



SigerNomen substantivum:

substantivum est modus significandi accidentalis designans circa rem modum per se entis et abstracti sive sit proprie ens per se...sive sint entia per se distincta ab illo in quo sunt.

Nomen adiectivum:

adiectivum est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi adiacentis.

Numerus:

numerus est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi unius aut multi.

Ordo:Pars orationis:

pars est dictio, et vox, ideo modus consignificandi per quem pars est pars praesupponit rationem significandi, vocem et significatum.. vox formaliter dicitur pars orationis per modum significandi activum.

Participium:

est modus significandi generalis participii, modus significandi fieri, motus, fluxus seu esse.. modus significandi specificus participii est modus significandi indistantis seu uniti distantiae.

Thomas

nomen substantivum significat per modum determinati secundum essentiam.

nomen adiectivum significat per modum inhaerentis alteri secundum esse.

numerus est modus significandi accidentaliter nominis, mediante quo nomen proprietatem indivisibilitatis, quae est proprietas unius, vel proprietatem divisibilitatis, quae est proprietas multitudinis significat.

est ordo in coniunctione modus significandi activus, quo mediante coniunctio ordinem extremorum consignificat.

pars est pars secundum se per hanc rationem consignificandi activum, tanquam per principium formale.

participium est pars orationis significans per modum esse indistantis a substantia, sive uniti cum substantia.



SigerThomasPerfectio:

perfectio...est...passio sermonis tertia et ultimo, ex debita constructibilium unione derelicta, cum sufficientia exprimendi mentis conceptum compositum secundum distantiam, et generandi perfectam sententiam in anime auditoris.

Persona (nomen):

est persona modus significandi nominis, mediante quo nomen proprietatem loquendi consignificat.

Persona (verbum):

persona est modus significandi accidentaliter verbi designans circa rem modum essendi prout convenit alicui sub aliquo modo loquendi.

persona est modus significandi, quo mediante verbum proprietatem loquendi consignificat non inhaerentem de se, sed ut res verbi applicabilis est rei suppositi subsistentis per se secundum proprietates loquendi.

Potestas:

potestas in coniunctione consistit in speciali modo coniungendi. Et istiusmodi modus est modus coniungendi per vim, et per ordinem.

Praepositio:

modus specificus est modus significandi per modum retorquentis casuale ad actum.

est praepositio pars orationis significans per modum adiacentis alteri casuali, ipsum contrahens, et ad actum reducens.

Pronomen:

modus significandi per quem pronomen est pronomen est modus significandi substantiae, habitus permanentis, seu entis...modus significandi indeterminati, confusi, substantiae mere seu sine qualitate, accidit pronomini, unde pronomen est.

pronomen est pars orationis significans per modum entis, et indeterminatae apprehensionis.



SigerThomasPronomen demonstrativum:

pronomen demonstrativum significat rem sub ratione vel proprietate praesentiae seu notitiae primae.

Pronomen relativum:

pronomen relativum significat rem sub proprietate absentiae, et incertitudinis, seu notitiae secundae.

Qualitas:

qualitas propria est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi vel quod ei repugnat reperiri in pluribus...qualitas appellativa est modus significandi accidentalis nominis designans circa rem modum essendi prout rei non repugnat reperiri in pluribus.

qualitas, quam assignat Donatus pro accidente nominis, dividens eam in qualitatem propriam et appellativum, nominat duos modos essentialis nominis subalternos, scilicet modum communis, et appropriati.

Significatio (adverbium):

significatio in adverbio est modus significandi, quo mediante adverbium repraesentat specialem modum determinandi verbum, vel participium, aut ratione significati, aut ratione modi significandi.

Significatio (interiectio):

significatio interiectionis consistit in speciali modo determinandi, specialem motum in anima repraesentans.

Significatio (verbum):

significatio accidentalis est modus significandi accidentalis verbi, mediante quo verbum significat proprietatem dependentiae ad quemlibet obliquum post se.



SigerSpecies (nomen):

species est modus significandi  
accidentalis nominis designans  
proprietaem determinandi ab  
aliquo vel a nullo.

Tempus:

tempus est modus significandi  
accidentalis verbi designans  
circa rem modum essendi  
praesentialitatis vel  
praeteritionis vel futuritionis.

Verbum:

modus significandi generalis  
essentialis verbi est modus  
significandi per modum fluxus,  
fieri seu motus, seu esse...modus  
specificus verbi est modus  
significandi essentialis de aliquo  
seu significare per modum distan-  
tis vel facientis alterum  
extremum orationis.

Vox:

vox non est vox propter modum  
proferendi: vox est percussio  
aeris respirati ad arteriam  
vocalem ab iis partibus cum  
imagine significandi.

Thomas

species est modus significandi  
accidentalis nominis, mediante  
quo modum significandi primum  
vel secundarium significat.

tempus est modus significandi  
accidentalis verbi, quo  
mediante verbum, citra rem,  
modum temporis consignificat.

verbum est pars orationis  
significans per modum esse  
distantis a substantia.

vox, inquantum vox, non  
consideratur a grammatico, sed  
inquantum signum, quia  
grammatica est de signis  
rerum.



Bibliography.

- i) Texts.
- ii) The History of Linguistics.
- iii) The Mediaeval Background.
- iv) General Linguistics.

The following abbreviations for the names of certain periodical publications have been used in the text of this thesis and also in the bibliography:

- SB - Sitzungsbericht der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- TPS - Transactions of the Philological Society
- TCLC - Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Copenhague.
- CFS - Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure.
- TCLP - Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague.
- BSLP - Bulletin de la Société Linguistique de Paris.
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- 1) I am indebted to Dr. R.W. Hunt for the loan of his transcriptions of these manuscripts.
- 2) Thurot's work has been used in particular as the source for quotations from Michel de Marbais, and also for quotations from Peter Helias on the partes orationis.



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1) This was published as the work of J. Duns Scotus; this work is now generally attributed to Thomas of Erfurt, and throughout is referred to as the work of Thomas of Erfurt.



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Chronology.

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William of Conches . . . . .	d.1154
Peter Helias . . . . .	c.1150
John of Salisbury. . . . .	1120-1180
Alexander Villa-Dei. . . . .	c.1200
Ebarhardus Bethuniensis. . . . .	c.1220
John of Garland. . . . .	d.1252
Robert Grosseteste . . . . .	1175-1253
Thomas Aquinas . . . . .	1227-1274
Petrus Hispanus. . . . .	d.1277
Robert Kilwardby . . . . .	d.1279
Albertus Magnus. . . . .	1206-1280
Lambert of Auxerre . . . . .	c.1250
William of Sherwood. . . . .	c.1250
Boethius of Dacia. . . . .	d.1284
Roger Bacon. . . . .	1215-1292
Michel de Marbais. . . . .	d.1300
Martin of Dacia. . . . .	d.1304
John of Dacia. . . . .	c.1290
Duns Scotus. . . . .	1270-1308
Siger de Courtrai. . . . .	d.1341
William Occam. . . . .	1290-1348
Thomas of Erfurt . . . . .	c.1350